FOX SORRY FOR TRASHING CANADA, PG 7

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Celebrity Buzz
Jackson wants baby No. 4
pg 40

Ice melting on Great Lakes

WATER Scientists at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory say there has been more than a 30 per cent ice decline on the lakes since the 1970s. Scientists who have studied the lakes at the lab in Ann Arbor, Mich., say the waters also are influenced by natural cycles that counter global warming.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Riding the **Recession**

Looking for ways to save money and ride out the economic storm? Now through the end of March, Metro will share advice on how to cut down on expenses and navigate your way through the recession.

- Canada

The recession isn't doom and gloom for everyone: Part 2 of our series on businesses successfully coping with the downturn, pg 8

- This week

Food – More tasty, local meals for a steal.

Earth **Hour**

Earth Hour is Saturday, March 28, at 8:30 p.m. Do your part to fight global warming by switching off your lights for an hour. Pick up Metro every day for environmentally-friendly coverage all week.

- Local

Toronto keeping climate change pollutants in check: Report, pg 4

- Health & Beauty

Certified organic: How to be sure a beauty product is living up to its claims, pg 29

- Tomorrow

Canada has a significant role in developing electric cars.

Skating

Spinning into world's

PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Patrick Chan, 18, from Toronto performs his routine yesterday during a practice session in preparation for the world figure skating championships in Los Angeles. Competition begins today. Chan opened the season with a pair of Grand Prix titles, added his second Canadian title, then dominated a strong field to win the Four Continents title in Vancouver.

Big bucks coming

Ontario will spend $27.5 billion on roads, schools, hospitals and public transit over the next two years in an effort to create 300,000 new jobs, Premier Dalton McGuinty said yesterday.

McGuinty said the huge infrastructure investment — which will be detailed in Thursday's provincial budget — will be topped up with another $5 billion from the federal government.

"We've been asked globally to find a way collectively to respond to this worldwide recession," McGuinty said as he announced the funding at a Toronto hospital.

"We're doing our part here in Ontario to stimulate the economy: $32.5 billion is the single largest two-year investment in infrastructure ever."

Transportation projects will get the biggest chunk of the infrastructure money at $9 billion, followed by health care at $7 billion and education at $4 billion.

The investment is expected to translate into 146,000 jobs in the first year and 168,000 in the second.

The federal Conservative government came under fire for inadequate oversight as it tried to get infrastructure spending out the door quickly to stimulate the economy, something McGuinty vowed won't happen in Ontario.

"It's a lot of money and we want to get it out the door in short order," he said.

"Obviously, we're going to be as rigorous as we possibly can be to ensure that taxpayers are being served well, the money's being used wisely, and it's creating the jobs we want to have created."

Finance Minister Dwight Duncan has already indicated that this week's budget will include a deficit of about $18 billion over two years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Go west, only with a catch

Saskatchewan politicians will again swoop into a recession-ravaged Ontario to entice as many workers as they can to go west, their second attempt in six months.

"We may not have a professional hockey team, but then neither do you," Regina Mayor Pat Fiacco says with a laugh. "I'm just kidding."

Last time, the politicians tried to woo Toronto's ethnically diverse Thorncliffe Park with a barbecue during the Ramadan fast.

Now, the province is targeting university and college graduates nationwide: Up to $20,000 if you come to Saskatchewan. The catch? You have to stay there — for at least seven years.

> **"We may not have a professional hockey team, but then neither do you."**
> Regina Mayor Pat Fiacco

The initiative is a tiered system designed to reverse the flow of educated workers from the province. Rob Norris, Saskatchewan's minister for advanced education, employment, and labour, said: "For the first time in a very long time we're seeing population growth in Saskatchewan."

Fiacco, along with Premier Brad Wall and Saskatoon Mayor Donald Atchison, will be coming to Toronto later this month and in early April to attend a job fair with Saskatchewan companies.

Atchison said their province has managed to avoid the worst effects of the recession.

"Saskatoon has one of the most diversified economies in all of Canada," he said, listing various industries and billions of dollars of investments in mining and potash.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Based on GM Testing in accordance with approved Transport Canada test methods. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. ♦Applies to 2009 Cobalt XFE (1AJ37/69). Based on Natural Resources Canada's 2009 Energuide data and GM vehicle segmentation for the Compact Car – Regular segment. Applies to the 2009 HHR LS (1AT46/1AT26). Based on Natural Resources Canada's 2009 Energuide data and GM vehicle segmentation for the Compact Multi Purpose Vehicle Segment. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. ▽GMCL will pay the first two months GMAC finance payments for finance terms up to 60 months only, paid up to a maximum monthly finance payment of $400 (tax included). Offer applicable to equal monthly payment finance agreements with GMAC and subject to GMAC credit approval. Visit gmstudentbonus.ca for more details. iPod® is a registered trademark of Apple Inc. ◊US government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program. For more information on safety ratings, go to www.safercar.gov. 2009 Chevrolet HHR received both a 5-star rating for the driver and front passenger in the frontal crash test and for front and rear seat occupants in the side-impact crash test. 2009 Chevrolet Aveo5 received a 5-star rating for driver and front passenger in the frontal crash test. **Chevrolet Cobalt SS Coupe with 29U, MSRP $25,825. Chevrolet Aveo5 LS with PG9 and UE1, MSRP $14,720.

Police seize guns and ammo
Two guns are off the streets and three Toronto men face charges after two separate investigations by the Toronto police gun and gang task force last week. The squad confiscated a 9 mm handgun along with 28 rounds of ammunition near Morningside Avenue and Sheppard Avenue East. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Local

Taiwan fires Toronto-based official

Taiwan's government has fired an official at its Toronto representative office for lying about authoring an article calling for rival China to use force to take over the island. Vice-Minister Hsu Chiou-huang's announcement yesterday came just hours after a television interview aired showing Kuo Kuan-ying, left, admitting that he had called for Chinese control of Taiwan. Kuo had earlier denied opposition charges that he used a pen name to write the article. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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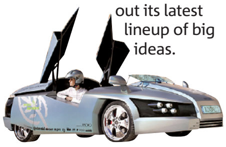

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These results are not official.

Workers seek safeguards

CAW members want government protection for severance pay

A call yesterday for provincial action on severance pay for autoworkers was deflected by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, who said the federal government must do more on the issue.

Members of the Canadian Auto Workers union held the first of three planned rallies to call on the province to use this week's budget to introduce strong protection provisions for severance pay.

"When workers lose their jobs, they are entitled to get severance pay, vacation pay, termination pay — this is written in law," CAW official Peggy Nash told fellow demonstrators.

"But workers are not getting this pay, so we're here today to say to the minister of labour: Workers want the pay that they're entitled to. It ought to be protected by law."

CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sam Hui, a Chrysler worker at the Brampton plant and member of the Canadian Auto Workers Union, joins a protest yesterday outside the offices of Ontario Labour Minister Peter Fonseca's constituency office in Mississauga.

Several workers at the rally, held outside the Mississauga constituency office of Ontario Labour Minister Peter Fonseca, wore life preservers around their necks emblazoned with "Save Our Severance."

The union wants a provincial wage-earner protection program that would provide additional protection on top of the federal program.

January's federal budget extended that program to cover severance and termination pay, subject to the current maximum of four weeks of insurable earnings of $3,254. The change will help ensure that workers losing their jobs because of a bankruptcy will receive some of the money owed to them.

McGuinty agreed that something must be done for severances in general.

"If we're talking about severances generally, for a number of folks who've lost their jobs in recent months particularly because of this recession, there is something that can, and which I agree, should be done," McGuinty said yesterday.

"The federal government should change its bankruptcy legislation so it gives preferred creditor status to ordinary men and women who are workers."

As it stands, banks and insurance companies rank ahead of workers, McGuinty added.

The union plans to hold similar protests today at the Labour Ministry offices in Toronto, and at the provincial legislature tomorrow.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bail for terror suspect loosened

A federal court has relaxed some bail conditions of Toronto terrorism suspect Mahmoud Jaballah, loosening round-the-clock supervision by allowing him to remain at home alone for up to six hours on weekdays.

Justice Eleanor Dawson also extended his curfew and paved the way to letting Jaballah attend his son's wedding this summer. Although it was premature to rule on whether he can attend the ceremony, "as a matter of principle, every effort should be made to permit this," Dawson ruled.

Mahmoud Jaballah

That ruling, released Friday, also lets Jaballah's children use a video-gaming system at home, provided certain conditions are met, such as not connecting it to the Internet.

The judge also upheld the right of the Canada Border Services Agency to conduct "overt surveillance" on Jaballah while he is out in public with his family.

The ruling came days after a judge agreed to send accused terrorist Mohammad Mahjoub back to jail after Mahjoub said he prefers life behind bars to the harassment by investigators his family faced while he was on bail.

But Jaballah's lawyer, Barbara Jackman, had requested Jaballah be allowed to stay home without a supervising surety round the clock, which would have permitted his wife to work full time.

"(The court) is not going to let him stay at home alone long enough for her to have a full-time job," Jackman said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Vaughan graffiti crackdown could cost property owners

BYLAW Vaughan property owners must remove all signs of graffiti from their buildings under a tough new bylaw passed yesterday.

"Graffiti costs us all money and we need to do something about it," Mayor Linda Jackson said in an interview.

The bylaw requires owners of defaced property to remove graffiti within a certain period

Failing that, the city can do the job and add the cost to the owner's property tax bill.

Property owners can also be charged with failing to comply with an order if they don't remove graffiti promptly.

> **"Graffiti costs us all money and we need to do something about it."**
> Mayor Linda Jackson

Jackson said the city recently spent $4,000 to sandblast and restain a section of wooden fence on the east side of Highway 400 that had been defaced with graffiti.

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Date night a win at ROM
The Royal Ontario Museum had its one-millionth general admission visitor yesterday. John Corvaci, 26, of Hamilton, on a date with girlfriend Adina Marcu, received a one-year ROM family membership and dinner at c5 Restaurant Lounge. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Urban dwellers greener: Study

When it comes to climate change pollutants, Toronto residents are among the greenest in Canada, says a new study.

The report, published in the April issue of the journal Environment and Urbanization, says metropolises, commonly denigrated as big, dirty places, are, in fact, spewing fewer greenhouse gases per capita than the rest of their countries.

"Blaming cities for climate change is far too simplistic," said author David Dodman, a researcher at the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, England. "There are a lot of economies of scale associated with energy use in cities.

> **"There are a lot of economies of scale associated with energy use in cities."**
> David Dodman, researcher

If you're an urban dweller, particularly in an affluent country like Canada or the U.K., you're likely to be more efficient in your use of heating fuel and in your use of energy for transportation."

Dodman found that the average Canadian is responsible for 24 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year, while Torontonians just 8.2 tonnes.

But it's not all good news for the GTA. The study, based on data from 12 international cities, ranked Toronto as the third worst for per capita greenhouse gas emissions, behind Glasgow (8.4 tonnes) and Washington, D.C. (19.7 tonnes).

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Slain Brampton mom remembered

FUNERAL One relative missing from Fatima Lima's funeral yesterday was on everyone's mind. "It's so sad there weren't cameras inside so Justin could see the service," family friend Emily Medeiros said after the ceremony — a reference to Lima's youngest son, currently in police custody. Police charged Justin Lima, 28, with second-degree murder in connection with the slaying. The young father had been battling depression for years, relatives said.
Addressing about 800 mourners in Portuguese, a priest at Brampton's Our Lady of Fatima Church yesterday spoke of Justin and forgiveness. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Ship considered a structure

COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Captain John's restaurant, at the foot of Yonge Street at Queen's Quay, has lost a second court appeal of its tax assessment.

TAXES Captain John's floating restaurant has hit another legal shoal in its efforts to steer clear of high property taxes.

A panel of three judges has ruled the vessel moored at the foot of Yonge Street is, for legal purposes, a "structure."

And that means it must pay property tax on the same basis as shore-bound buildings.

Restaurant owner John Letnik had appealed his assessment in 2007 as his taxes crept up to about $36,000 — double what they were in the 1990s.

Letnik's business is housed in the M.S. Jadran, a 90-metre former cruise ship that has been moored in the same spot for more than three decades. He pays a monthly fee for use of the dock, plus property taxes of more than $36,000 annually.

The court ordered Letnik's company to pay $7,500 in legal costs to the Municipal Property Assessment Corp.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Councillor budgets curbed

EXPENSES Gone are the bunny suit rentals, espresso machines and limousine rides for constituents.

Under stiffer new rules for how councillors spend their $53,100 office budgets, the city clerk's office now has ultimate say over all such expenses.

There's no more alcohol, business meals have been capped at $500 a year, and expenses have been posted online since late last year.

Among the items they can't expense are personal long-distance calls, mileage or taxi rides for regular travel from home to city hall, vehicle licensing fees, traffic or parking fines, and car wash fees.

Among items they can expense are donations to community groups, two charity event tickets per year, and design and hosting fees for websites.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

BUST A 57-year-old man was arrested after more than $500,000 worth of drugs was found following a traffic stop Friday. The officer saw a white substance in the car, which turned out to be ketamine. A search warrant was obtained for a home in Markham where police turned up ketamine and ecstasy with a combined street value of $530,000. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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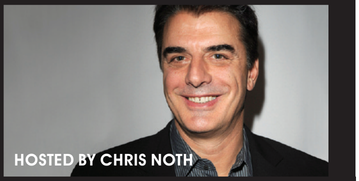

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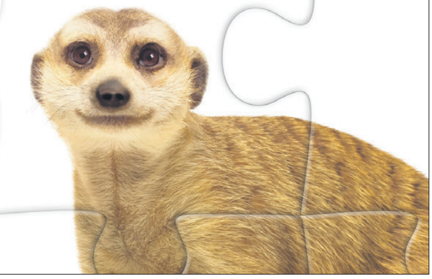

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$10M of cocaine seized at Windsor-Detroit border

Two crates of oranges in a Toronto-bound tractor-trailer harboured almost $10 million worth of cocaine, authorities say. Officers seized 69 bricks of cocaine weighing almost 78 kilograms on Friday at the Windsor-Detroit border. A 40-year-old Maple man faces drug-trafficking charges. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

News in brief

JAIL TERM Garfield Anthony Sibblies, 40, of Brampton, son of acclaimed reggae singer Leroy Sibbles, will likely spend less than another six months in jail after being given a six-and-a-half-year federal prison sentence yesterday for killing a child under his care.

DEATH Police have ruled the fatal GO Train accident on Saturday that killed 18-year-old Jafari Williamson of Mississauga was "death by misadventure." Williamson and a friend had disembarked from a train at Clarkson GO station when they jumped back on and held on to the side of the train as it sped away. The friend was able to jump back onto the platform, but Williamson was not and was pulled underneath the train. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

UNICEF Raising a glass to clean water

BEN RUTHERFORD/FOR METRO TORONTO

Opera singer Measha Brueggergosman, from left, TSN's Jack Armstrong and Toronto Mayor David Miller raise a glass yesterday at The Keg Mansion on Jarvis Street. Until Sunday, The Keg and other participating restaurants will invite customers to add $1 to their bill for the tap water they would normally get for free. Donations will benefit UNICEF's water and hygiene programs.

Mayor seeks wage freeze

City workers asked to give up pay increases this year

Toronto Mayor David Miller wants non-union employees to give up cost-of-living pay increases this year — and said he's asking the same thing of every other city employee.

But leaders of the city's unions — now in contract talks — branded a wage freeze the "wrong remedy for economic ills caused by the recession."

"Public services have a critical role to play in the recovery, but not through wage erosion," said Mark Ferguson, who heads Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 416, which represents outdoor workers.

Ferguson said union negotiators are still seeking a wage increase in the three per cent range, similar to those recently received by police and parking authority staff.

Richard Majkot, head of the association representing non-union staff, said his members would accept a two-year pay freeze if unionized workers also had their pay frozen.

Miller touched off the latest pay-raise debate by asking the city's employee and labour relations committee to freeze cost-of-living increases for non-union employees and limit them to one per cent in 2010.

The mayor's plan would also scrap merit increases for most employees. Only those eligible for experience-related increases would see their pay rise, providing they met performance standards.

Miller says the pay limits will save about $20 million over two years, which he wants to put in a reserve fund to cover rising welfare costs.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> **"Public services have a critical role to play in the recovery, but not through wage erosion."**
> Mark Ferguson, CUPE Local 416

Dispute over farm-union ban taken to UN group

LABOUR One of Canada's largest unions announced yesterday it has filed a complaint with the United Nations against the Ontario government for preventing farm workers from forming labour unions.

The complaint by United Food and Commercial Workers Canada to the UN's International Labour Organization argues the ban on farm unions is unconstitutional and violates workers' human rights.

In November, the Ontario Court of Appeal tossed out a provincial law that effectively prohibited farm workers from unionizing, but the Ontario government has asked the Supreme Court of Canada to overturn the decision.

The Supreme Court is expected to decide whether to hear the province's appeal later this spring.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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University bans bottled water sales

The University of Winnipeg will become what is believed to be the first university in Canada to ban the sale of bottled water on campus. The ban follows a referendum in which three-quarters of students who voted said they were in favour of ditching water sold in bottles. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Canada

Quebec needs help: Charest

Premier Jean Charest says it's about time for Ottawa to do its part to help workers and companies in Quebec weather the tough economic times. Charest made the comment near Montreal yesterday after confirming the federal government is providing 80 per cent of the funding for a $518-million provincial job-support program. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Fox News show sparks outrage

Pundit apologizes for trashing Canada after four more soldiers die

A Fox News host apologized yesterday to Canadians in the face of widespread outrage over comments he and his guests made on a late-night talk show.

The statement came hours after a request by the Canadian government for an apology over remarks about this country's military that were described as "despicable" and "disgusting."

Greg Gutfeld, host of the controversial segment on Fox's Red Eye show, said he never intended to make light of Canadian military efforts in Afghanistan.

"However, I realize that my words may have been misunderstood," Gutfeld said in a statement released by Fox News.

"It was not my intent to disrespect the brave men, women and families of the Canadian military, and for that I apologize.

"Red Eye is a satirical take on the news, in which all topics are addressed in a lighthearted, humorous and ridiculous manner."

The recent talk show segment was taped just before four more Canadian soldiers were killed in Afghanistan and featured a group of pundits taking turns trashing Canada and its reliability as an ally.

They were spurred by comments from Canada's army chief that the military would need a year's hiatus to regroup and refurbish after its Kandahar mission ends in 2011.

In the Fox News segment, widely aired on the Internet, Gutfeld said the Canadian military "wants to take a breather to do some yoga, paint landscapes, run on the beach in gorgeous white capri pants."

"Isn't this the perfect time to invade this ridiculous country?" Gutfeld said on his show.

"They have no army."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A "ridiculous country's" sacrifice

- Canadian soldiers have been fighting in Afghanistan since 2001 and have spent the last four years in the country's most violent region. Canada has lost 116 soldiers in Afghanistan, the highest casualty rate among allied countries fighting there.
- Dan Dugas, a spokesman for Defence Minister Peter MacKay, said, "I think that so-called comedian should stare in the camera at his first opportunity and apologize to all of the families of people he's hurt with these despicable comments."

VideoOnline

See Fox's "analysis" of Canada's military efforts in Afghanistan at **metronews.ca/canada**

Slain troopers arrive home

AFGHANISTAN The bodies of four Canadian soldiers killed in two separate bomb attacks in Afghanistan last week have returned home.

A military aircraft carrying the four flag-draped caskets arrived at CFB Trenton yesterday.

One attack last Friday killed Master Cpl. Scott Vernelli and Cpl. Tyler Crooks, who were both members of November Company, 3rd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment.

The second attack killed Trooper Jack Bouthillier and Trooper Corey Hayes of the Royal Canadian Dragoons. All four soldiers were based at CFB Petawawa.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Training expired: Testimony

TASER INQUIRY The supervising RCMP officer on duty the night Robert Dziekanski died at Vancouver's airport says he gave the command to stun the man with a Taser.

Cpl. Benjamin Monty Robinson, the senior officer on duty the night Dziekanski died, is the fourth officer to testify at a public inquiry.

Robinson says he gave Const. Kwesi Millington the order to use the Taser when Dziekanski picked up a stapler. Millington testified earlier that the only time Robinson told him to use the Taser was before the third deployment, when Dziekanski was already on the ground.

Robinson had been trained in Taser use but that training had expired seven months before. Robinson told the inquiry that Dziekanski didn't fall to the floor until after the second jolt, although a video shows the second stun happened when he was on the ground. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

RCMP Cpl. Benjamin Monty Robinson is seen on a television screen yesterday as he testifies at the Braidwood inquiry in Vancouver. The inquiry is looking into the death of Robert Dziekanski, who was stunned with a Taser by RMCP officers at the Vancouver International Airport in 2007.

News in brief

INQUEST The deaths of two aboriginal men trapped in cells during a jailhouse fire in northern Ontario were almost inevitable given the deplorable state of policing in First Nation communities, a coroner's inquest heard yesterday.

DETENTION A religious worker terrorized during a carjacking in Niagara Falls, Ont., was apparently detained along with two companions by U.S. border guards after their vehicle showed up on a police watch list. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

SEASON FINALE
RICK MERCER REPORT
This week, Rick tackles the slopes with Canada's champion Para-Alpine team.
Tonight at 8
followed by *THIS HOUR HAS 22 MINUTES* at 8:30
CBC
cbc.ca/mercerreport

Avalanche casualties rise
The death of an Alberta man in B.C. has brought this season's avalanche death toll in Western Canada to 20. The man was killed Saturday near Blue River, just east of Wells Gray Provincial Park in eastern B.C. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Find your niche, experts say

Riding the **Recession**

The recession hit just as 51-year-old Calgarian Dale McKenzie retired from a 30-year career in policing.

He didn't panic about his investments — he has niche skills that are helping him survive during the downturn. He works as a clown named Bumper and is starting an investigative business that delves mostly into mortgage fraud.

"There's no lack for that kind of stuff," he said. "As long as there is mistrust and as long as there are lawbreakers, there will be room for private investigation."

McKenzie has been a clown for eight years, and while he said business isn't booming, it isn't failing, either. He thinks there will always be a demand for people who can put a smile on your face.

Karen Fraser, of Angus One Professional Recruitment in Vancouver, said it's crucial for people to have a specialized skill set or can break into a niche market.

"Across the board, there's still a wide range of companies hiring," she said. "People are hiring in online marketing and Internet shopping, which has seen growth … specialized positions are still consistent."

The Alberta government's predictions fall in line with Fraser's experience in B.C. — projections for the next decade say there will be more than enough jobs for architects, dietitians, nutritionists, physical therapists and school counsellors.

But even if you don't have a specialized set of skills, Canadian staffing companies are hopeful summer seasonal work reverses jobs lost to the economic downtown.

"From what we see, landscaping work and construction should be picking up here shortly," said Clint Belcourt in Calgary.

JENNIFER HILLIKER/ FOR METRO CANADA

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DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two women leave the Earls restaurant in Chilliwack, B.C., last Friday. The restaurant was sprayed with bullets and graffiti in what police say is an attack aimed at those opposing gangs.

Combatting gangs putting police over budget: Report

CRIME Vancouver's police department spent almost half its Criminal Investigation Fund fighting gang violence in the first few months of this year.

In a report going to Vancouver city council tomorrow, Chief Const. Jim Chu says the unprecedented level of gang violence and the need to respond means the fund will be significantly over budget by the end of the year.

Chu says their plan to target the most violent gang members is working and police have even stopped suspects who were in "hunting mode," where gang members were arrested armed and wearing bullet-proof vests.

Chu says Project Rebellion has resulted in more than 120 charges approved or pending against 38 people.

The chief says because the project requires maximum staffing levels, overtime and emergency response teams for high-risk arrests, the $2-million budget was drained by half near the beginning of March.

There have been 40 shootings in the past few months in the Metro Vancouver area, 17 of them were fatal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

East Coast seal hunt underway

SEALING The East Coast seal hunt got underway yesterday in the ice floes of the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence around Quebec's Iles de la Madeleine, although weather was hindering the efforts of anti-hunt observers.

About 20 sealing vessels from the islands ventured out to sea, while some land-based hunting was also underway, said Phil Jenkins, a spokesman for the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Jenkins said conditions had made part of the seal herd accessible to hunters by land. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

News in brief

LAW It's only a matter of time before all provinces in Canada will have to ensure children who are artificially conceived after the death of a parent get the same inheritance rights as their siblings, Manitoba's justice minister said yesterday.

COURT Saskatchewan justice officials will not appeal the acquittal of former aboriginal leader David Ahenakew on a hate crime charge.

FLOODING Flood waters heading toward Manitoba are likely to force the evacuation of two small communities and put many roads and crops underwater, provincial officials say.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Friday the 13th proves lucky

Ignoring his friends has paid off big for a New York man. He won $26 million in a Friday the 13th lottery draw. New York state lottery officials say the winner lives in Wyandanch, on Long Island, but did not disclose the name of the El Salvador native. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

World

Eruption in Alaska

Alaska's Mount Redoubt volcano erupted five times in about six hours yesterday. Officials say the volcano spewed an ash plume more than 15 kilometres into the air in its first eruptions in nearly 20 years. Residents of Anchorage, the state's largest city, have been spared from falling ash. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Russian submarines may 'protect' Arctic

Admiral discusses plans for disputed region

Russia could use navy submarines to help claim and protect resources in the disputed Arctic region, a top admiral was quoted as saying yesterday.

Vice-admiral Oleg Burtsev told the RIA Novosti news agency submarines from Russia's Northern Fleet could be involved in efforts to stake Russia's claim to the region.

Russia, the U.S., Canada and other northern countries are trying to assert jurisdiction over the Arctic, which is believed to contain huge oil and natural gas reserves.

In 2007, two Russian civilian mini-submarines descended to the Arctic seabed to collect geologic and water samples and drop a titanium canister containing the Russian flag.

Burtsev, the Russian navy's deputy chief of staff, was quoted as saying authorities hadn't decided yet whether to use robotic underwater vehicles or submarines to stake claims on the Arctic shelf.

"In any case, Northern Fleet submarines will be used to either explore or protect Arctic territories adjacent to Russia," he was quoted as saying.

The 2007 Russian mission exacerbated the controversy over an area that is believed to contain as much as 25 per cent of the world's undiscovered oil and gas.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Diplomat explains bomber flight

A Russian diplomat says Canada's reaction to what he called a normal training flight by Russian bombers in the Arctic was a return to Cold War rhetoric. Dmitry Trofimov told the Commons defence committee that Canadian, American and British military air crews do exactly the same thing near Russian borders, without incident. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

News in brief

PAKISTAN A Pakistani government official says a suicide bomber blew himself up close to a police station in the capital Islamabad, killing himself and one officer.

GAZA Egyptian police seized a flock of 560 sheep set to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip through underground tunnels. Gaza has been under a blockade since June 2007.

BLIZZARD Snow covered most of Wyoming yesterday, with up to 50 centimetres expected in the eastern region and warnings posted for central Wyoming. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Saudi Arabia **Police criticized**

HASSAN AMMAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Saudi women look at jewelry at a gold fair in Riyadh on Saturday. A Saudi human rights group issued a report yesterday that criticizes the kingdom's religious police, saying its members sometimes commit acts that infringe on individual rights.

Plane flew erratically before Montana crash, says witness

CRASH The single-engine turboprop airplane that crashed just short of Montana's Butte airport jerked to the left before nose-diving into a cemetery, killing all 14 people aboard, a witness said yesterday.

Kenny Gulick, 14, told CBS's The Early Show on Monday that he thought he was watching a stunt plane because the pilot was making so many turns.

A death toll of 14 — seven adults and seven children — was confirmed by a U.S. Federal Aviation Administration official. Earlier, the count had been put as high as 17.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dalai Lama barred from South Africa

CONFERENCE South Africa barred the Dalai Lama from a peace conference in Johannesburg this week, saying yesterday it did not want to endanger the government's relationship with China. The move prompted sharp criticism from the Nobel Committee, among others.

Dalai Lama

Thabo Masebe, a spokesman for President Kgalema Motlanthe, said now was not the time for such a high-profile visit from the Tibetan spiritual leader and added that South Africa hoped to avoid being "the source of negative publicity about China."

The conference is intended to bring Nobel laureates, Hollywood celebrities and others together to discuss issues ranging from anti-racism to sport as a way to bring peoples and countries together.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Mexico targets drug lords
Mexico has put a $2-million price tag on the head of each of the country's 24 top drug lords. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

'Tasteless' T-shirts provoke outrage

Israel's military condemns soldiers

Israel's military condemned soldiers for wearing T-shirts of a pregnant woman in a rifle's crosshairs with the slogan "1 Shot 2 Kills," and another of a gun-toting child with the words, "The smaller they are, the harder it is."

The T-shirts were worn by some Israeli Defence Force soldiers to mark the end of basic training and other military courses, the newspaper Haaretz said.

The appearance of the T-shirts followed allegations of misconduct by Israeli troops during the three-week Gaza war. Palestinian officials say about 1,400 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians. Thirteen Israelis died, three of them civilians.

The army said it would not tolerate the T-shirts and would take disciplinary action against the soldiers involved, although it was not clear how many wore the shirts or how widely they were distributed.

The military sought to portray the T-shirts as "tasteless" humour and condemned the soldiers involved, saying in a statement that the shirts "are not in accordance with IDF values." They were not manufactured or sanctioned by the military.

The shirts' existence was first reported Friday by Haaretz and later on broadcasts by Israeli radio and television.

Haaretz showed pictures of five shirts and said they were made at the unit level, indicating they were made for small numbers of troops, perhaps several dozen at a time. It said they were worn by an unknown number of enlisted men in different units. The Tel Aviv factory that made many of the shirts, Adiv, refused to comment.

Few in the Palestinian territories appeared to be aware of the T-shirts. In Gaza, Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said it "reflects the brutal mentality among the Zionist soldiers and the Zionist society."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Human shield

- UN human rights officials have accused Israeli soldiers of using an 11-year-old Palestinian boy as a human shield during the war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The UN secretary general's envoy for protecting children in armed conflict says the boy was ordered to walk in front of Israeli soldiers being fired on in the Gaza neighbourhood of Tel al-Hawa and to enter buildings before them.

British teens face conspiracy charge

PLOT Two British teens have been charged with plotting to bomb a school on the 10th anniversary of the Columbine High School killings in Colorado, prosecutors said yesterday.

A 16-year-old and a 17-year-old had a plan to strike on April 20, according to Britain's Crown Prosecution Service. The date marks 10 years since students Eric Harris, 18, and Dylan Klebold, 17, opened fire at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, killing 13 people before committing suicide in the school's library.

The British teens are accused of "conspiracy to cause an explosion likely to endanger life and injure property." Neither the teens nor the location of the school they allegedly planned to bomb can be named under British laws, which bar the identification of minors.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

KIDNAPPING A UN driver kidnapped with two Canadian diplomats in Niger late last year has been released unharmed after several governments in the region intervened, UN officials said yesterday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MURRAY BREWSTER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Haji Aga Lalai, the director of Kandahar's peace and reconciliation office, says some moderate Taliban fighters are open to accommodation with the Kabul government.

Moderate Taliban said to be open to talks

AFGHANISTAN Moderate elements of the Taliban appear more willing than ever to seek accommodation with the Kabul government but they want guarantees they will not be persecuted after they stop fighting, an Afghan official said.

"They don't trust government that after reconciliation Taliban will be safe," said Haji Aga Lalai, head of the Kandahar peace and reconciliation office, an agency that rehabilitates militants in the province under a national program.

Fissures began appearing about six months ago in the mishmash assembly of militants that is the Taliban insurgency, said Lalai, who spends most of his days glued to a cellphone hoping to convince insurgents to lay down their weapons.

A meeting of the ruling Taliban council — minus the elusive top leader Mullah Omar — was held in Quetta, Pakistan, last October.

Moderate voices among the 50 delegates at the meeting began agitating for some kind of accommodation with the government of President Hamid Karzai, said Lalai, who has spoken with participants.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Attacks kill 24 in Iraq
A suicide bomber struck a Kurdish funeral northeast of Baghdad yesterday, part of a series of attacks that killed 24 countrywide. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Baboons break into cars in South Africa

Baboons seeking snacks are breaking into tourists' cars in South Africa, and authorities have threatened to fine visitors who give them food and encourage their aggressive pursuit of bananas and sandwiches.

There have been a number of recent cases where baboons have stolen picnics and snatched bags from people in popular tourist spots around Cape Town.

In one incident, baboons jumped into the car of American visitors who were taking pictures on the side of the road.

In a statement yesterday, the city of Cape Town and conservationists voiced alarm that some tour operators were apparently deliberately baiting the baboons, despite numerous signs warning against feeding the animals.

SCHALK VAN ZUYDAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A baboon holds on to a signpost directing people to Miller's Point, South Africa.

"Any tour operator caught doing so can be charged under national conservation legislation," city official Piet van Zyl said.

"We appeal to the public to exercise extreme caution in interacting with baboons. Under no circumstances should they ever feed the animals, and should they do so they can be similarly charged," he said.

There are around 340 baboons in 20 to 30 troupes around Cape Town. They are a protected species under South African legislation. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Pope appeals for equal sharing with the poor

AFRICA Pope Benedict has wound up his visit to Africa with a final appeal for a more equal sharing of the Earth's resources with the world's poor.

In a departure speech delivered at the airport in the Angolan capital of Luanda, the pontiff also urged Angola's leaders to make "the fundamental aspirations of the most needy people" their main concern.

Benedict delivered a blessing for Angola's people as he wrapped up a seven-day African pilgrimage yesterday, his first to the continent as pontiff.

The Pope earlier visited Cameroon and Angola, each with large Catholic populations.

During his public appearances, Benedict suggested that Christianity could help Africans break through the "clouds of evil" over countries riven by war, tribalism and ethnic rivalry.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

SUICIDE Police say an Ohio man fatally shot himself in the head moments after realizing he had run over a friend in a bar parking lot. Police say it appears the man accidentally ran over his friend and he felt so bad about it that he took out a gun and shot himself.

RESTITUTION A money manager accused of trying to fake his death in a plane crash has taken another financial hit. Under an Indiana judge's order made public yesterday, Marcus Schrenker must pay $304,000 in restitution to bilked investors and $280,000 in state fines. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Ian Wright
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Comment & Views

Comment

So much for free speech

National**Report**

Lawrence Martin

metronews.ca/nationalreport

Whew! Let's breathe a sigh of relief now that British MP George Galloway has been barred from entering our country. Our children are safe. No telling what damage could have been rendered by this heinous threat to our national security.

If reports are correct, Canada is the only country in the world that bars the sitting MP, who has been elected five times to the British parliament and has no criminal record. The Americans let him in. Even Israel, despite his pro-Hamas views, let him in.

So what is the Harper government trying to do here? Ramp up its right-wing credentials to the point where Canada is seen as a denier of freedom of speech?

Some of Galloway's views are wacko. We can disagree readily with his take on Israel, with his support for Hamas, but does that mean you gag him? Others, Canadians and Americans, have supplied aid to Hamas and controlled Gaza. Will that get them the same kind of treatment? As someone said of Galloway, the best way to expose the folly of his arguments is to allow him to come here and spout them.

The Galloway ban follows one taken against an American citizen. William Ayers, the old friend of Barack Obama who was a figure of controversy in the U.S. presidential election, was an advocate of radical violence four decades ago. He has since become a distinguished professor of education who serves on dissertation committees at the University of Ottawa and Toronto. He has been allowed into Canada many times. He arrived to give a speech at the U of T in January, only to be told by immigration officials that he had a 40-year-old felony conviction, which he denies. When Ayers asked them if they really thought he was a security threat, he said they laughed, before saying it wasn't their decision.

GETTY IMAGES

George Galloway

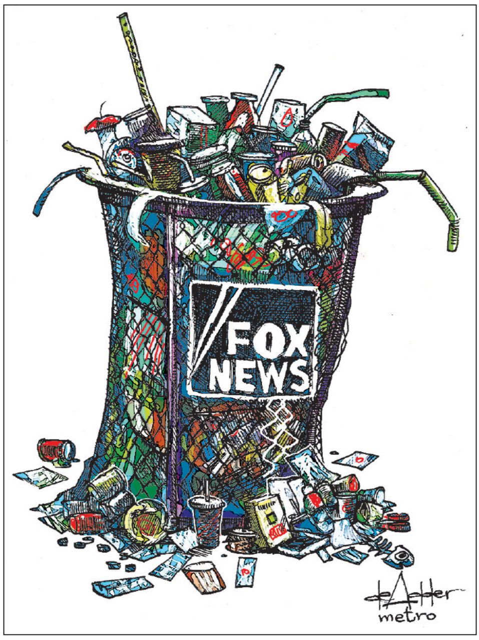
The bans are in keeping with other hardline measures by the Harperites recently. The government, which takes a leisurely attitude toward Guantanamo, is going ahead with the deportation of conscientious objectors to the war in Iraq — even though the prime minister disavowed his support for that war in last fall's election campaign.

The government last week announced it was not renewing $2.5 million in contracts for the Canadian Arab Federation to teach English to new immigrants.

On Iran, it has escalated the rhetoric against the government there — this while Obama moves to moral high ground with a diplomatic overture to Tehran to narrow the differences.

All quite strange. Rather than calm tensions, Ottawa's intent seems to be to inflame them.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Offer prescription info in person's language of choice

More than 150 languages are spoken in Toronto and approximately 70.2 per cent of Canadian immigrants report a first language that is not English.

When an individual is prescribed a medication, the instructions are printed in English. If a person can't read these instructions, it can be a significant barrier to their health.

We believe prescription information should be available in an individual's language of choice.

When medication information is available in a person's first language, health outcomes improve.

This information should be available in languages that are representative of Canada's diverse population. If individuals have access to this service, patient medication errors could largely be avoided.

In order to do this, the Ontario Ministry of Health would need to invest in translators who could translate drug information into different languages. By investing in this service, the ministry would be improving the lives of our immigrant populations.

**M. RIDDELL, S. VUU-CHAU,
A. TIRONA, A. BLACK, AND
S. CHUNG, RYERSON UNIVERSITY
NURSING STUDENTS**

Get over the climate change blame game

Re: Don't blame climate change (March 18)

The article is absent of reasons why we should not look to climate change for changes in snowfall, mean temperature rise and overall climate irregularities in specific localities such as Toronto. In spite of that, we do agree with the article that we should not blame climate change, but rather blame ourselves for causing these changes in our climate.

Let us get over this blame game and start reducing our individual CO2 impact and demand energy and planning policies from governments that address the most significant issue we are facing in our lifetimes.

Cursory misinformation might amuse readers, but when it comes to climate change, a better report is not only essential, but morally required.

**NOAH BINGHAM, TORONTO,
AND BRENNAN WAUTERS,
VANCOUVER**

Views

The happy Muslims who confuse you

Mona Eltahawy

Global View

There's something wrong with the pictures coming out of Pakistan these days.

Ever since Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari reinstated the country's chief justice, I've been trying to figure out what it was.

And then it hit me.

Happiness. Joy. Celebration.

How often do we see pictures of happy Muslim men? What a relief, too, that they were Pakistani.

I've developed a theory about the Muslims we see in the media, who are usually from Pakistan.

Angry Bearded Muslim Man is the favourite. Whenever the Muslim world is supposed to be upset or offended, invariably that story is illustrated by images of Angry Bearded Muslim Man: Marching (usually in Pakistan), shouting (fists raised in righteous anger), and burning something (an American flag, an Israeli flag, preferably both!)

His female counterpart is Covered In Black Muslim Woman. She's seen, never heard. Visible only in her invisibility under that black chador, burqa, face veil, etc.

In those images you have conveyed all you want to say about Muslims: The men are angry, dangerous and want to hurt us; the women are covered in black.

While there are some Muslim men and women who fit both such descriptions they are by no means the majority, and they are utterly insufficient in describing the diversity of views, appearances and attitudes among Muslims. But they make for sexy TV and enticing photos. And they are my biggest competitors and nemeses when I give lectures or appear on television.

My first U.S. TV appearance was on Fox News' The O'Reilly Factor. Talk about trial by fire! After the usual back-and-forth yelling, some viewers sent me emails, asking, "Are you sure you're a Muslim? Where's the headgear?"

Others wanted to know why I spoke English so well. Clearly, I did not deliver on the Covered In Black Muslim Woman that central casting usually offers to viewers. I was confusing them.

Which brings me back to the happy Pakistanis — men and women — in our newspapers these days.

While I'm the last person to deny the danger of radicals in the Muslim world, I also enthusiastically wave the flag for those of us who call ourselves liberal, secular Muslims.

In other words, I live to confuse you by subverting the stereotype of Muslims that you always see and hear from. Go on — take a look at my picture.

Here's to more pictures of Happy Muslim Men and Women Who Confuse You.

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning Egyptian-born commentator and public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues. She reported on the Middle East for 10 years before moving to the U.S.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. Email your thoughts and opinions to: torontoletters@metronews.ca
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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Twin Butte posts $4M fourth-quarter loss
Junior oil and gas company Twin Butte Energy Ltd. posted a fourth-quarter loss of $4 million, reversing a year-ago profit of $4.3 million. It said yesterday the loss amounts to nine cents per share compared with a profit of 15 cents per share in the year-ago period. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Confidence on the rise

Encouraging signs may mean recovery lies ahead: Think-tank

Canadians are beginning to feel better about their financial prospects and that may signal that consumers are ready to re-engage in the economy, the Conference Board of Canada says.

The Ottawa think-tank's monthly survey on consumer confidence continues a recent trend of better than expected indicators that chief economist Glen Hodgson says is consistent with an economy nearing the bottom of its rapid descent.

"We're beginning to form a bottom of the recession. We're starting to get people looking a little more creatively and optimistically ahead," Hodgson said.

"They understand they can buy stuff at a much better price than they did six months ago, that they are able to re-finance their mortgage at really impressive rates and that they probably aren't all going to lose their jobs."

Encouraging signs yesterday included a surge in equity markets that builds on two weeks of gains — an implicit first-blush vote of confidence to U.S. President Barack Obama's up to $1-trillion US plan to help out the financial sector — and new housing numbers showing a gain in sales south of the border.

The Conference Board's March survey showed Canadian consumer confidence rising 2.7 points to 71.5, although the index remains well below the 100 level that was prevalent until about last summer. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

> **"We're starting to get people looking a little more creatively and optimistically ahead."**
> Glen Hodgson, economist

U.S. targets bad bank assets

WASHINGTON U.S. President Barack Obama's administration aimed squarely at the crisis clogging the U.S. credit system yesterday with a plan to take over up to $1 trillion US in sour mortgage securities with the help of private investors.

The co-ordinated effort by the U.S. Treasury Department, the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. relies on a mix of government and private money — mostly from institutional investors such as hedge funds — to help banks rid their balance sheets of real estate related securities that are now extremely difficult to value.

The goal, said Obama, is to get banks lending again to jump-start the economy. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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Business in brief

APPOINTMENT Seamark Asset Management Ltd. has appointed chief operating officer Brent Barrie as the company's new chief executive officer, following the exit of president and CEO Stuart Raftus. Barrie has been with Seamark since 2001.

OIL Buffalo Resources Corp. shares jumped 20 per cent yesterday after the company said an independent evaluation has increased its proved plus probable reserves by 43 per cent to 21.5 million barrels of oil equivalents. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

New York Jeweller's profit falls

MARY ALTAFFER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Tiffany & Co. flagship store on Fifth Avenue is pictured in New York. The jewelry retailer said yesterday its profit tumbled more than 75 per cent in the fourth quarter following a steep drop in sales over the key holiday season.

AbitibiBowater deadline extended

DEBT Struggling newsprint giant AbitibiBowater Inc. has extended yet again its deadline to refinance its U.S. Bowater subsidiary as it races to avoid bankruptcy protection.

Acceptance levels for the debt restructuring proposal ranged from 80 per cent for notes due in 2013 to 40 per cent for a series maturing in 2021.

Approval has increased in most categories since March 13, but remains short of requirements. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Michigan paper to close, will be replaced by online operation

The Ann Arbor News will cease publication in July after 174 years and will be replaced by a web-focused community news operation built from the ground up. Although AnnArbor.com plans print editions twice a week, officials stressed the new website won't simply be the old paper delivered in a new format. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Markets extend rally on oilpatch, bank plans

INDEXES Stock markets have extended their March rally into a third week, with Toronto's S&P/TSX composite index jumping 452.16 points yesterday to 8,958.51 after Suncor Energy Inc. and Petro-Canada announced their merger.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 497.48 points to 7,775.86, the Nasdaq composite index jumped 98.5 points to 1,555.77, and the S&P 500 index moved up 54.38 points to 822.92 after the U.S. Treasury Department unveiled its plan to revive bank lending.

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In brief

RESIGNATION Denison Mines Corp. said yesterday that Peter Farmer will step down as chief executive officer and director at the annual meeting April 30.

TRADE Caribbean leaders say they have accepted a proposal to discuss creating a free-trade agreement with Canada.

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Energy giants merge

Suncor, Petro-Canada unite to create $43.3B powerhouse in face of financial uncertainty

Suncor Energy Inc. and formerly government-owned Petro-Canada are merging to create a $43.3-billion global energy giant, which executives from both firms say will thrive in the economic downturn.

LARRY MACDOUGAL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rick George, left, Suncor president and CEO, speaks yesterday as Ron Brenneman, Petro-Canada president and CEO, listens during a press conference announcing their merger in Calgary yesterday.

The combined company, which will operate under the Suncor name, will be the largest energy company in Canada and the fifth largest in North America.

"We need to face head-on the issue of global competition in a time of economic uncertainty. In these difficult times, we believe that joining forces provides the strength we need to be a leader in value creation in an extremely competitive industry," Petro-Canada CEO Ron Brenneman said on a conference call with analysts yesterday.

Petro-Canada shareholders would own 40 per cent of the new Calgary-headquartered entity, assuming a proposed share swap approved by the boards of the two companies goes through as planned.

The companies, both active in the Alberta oilsands and both involved in refining and retailing, say their plan will reduce their costs by $300 million at a time when Alberta's oilpatch grapples with tough economic conditions.

While the combined entity will keep the Suncor name on the corporate level, Petro-Canada's brand will remain when it comes to selling refined products like gasoline and diesel.

"What we're trying to do here is take advantage of the brand value that both of these companies represent," said Brenneman.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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All-inclusive Holidays
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Oasis Varadero 1920 + taxes & fees $210
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Puerto Plata 4-Star $467 Grand Paradise Playa Dorada + taxes & fees $315 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 30/nol/ts.
Mayan Riviera 4-Star $497 Riu Lupita + taxes & fees $266 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 29/swg/5g.
Punta Cana 4-Star $565 Grand Paradise Bavaro + taxes & fees $309 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 31/swg/wg. ADD Scubadoo underwater adventure from $94.
Cancun 4-Star $597 Oasis Viva Beach + taxes & fees $266 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 29/sqv/5g. ADD Captain Hook cruise from $99.

Holidays
LAS VEGAS 4 NIGHTS $265
Circus Circus + taxes & fees $230
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 4 nights 3-star accom on the Las Vegas Strip. Departs Apr 6/swg/wg.
Orlando Family Holiday $299* Best Western Lakeside + taxes & fees $228 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 7 nights 3-star accom near Walt Disney World Resort. Departs Apr 1/ggv/wg. ADD 7-day Magic Your Way Base Ticket from $298.
Peru Starter Package $449 Grand Bolivar + taxes & fees $217 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and first 2 nights 3-star central accom in the famous Plaza San Martín in Lima. Departs May 27/ggv/ac.
New York City Easter Weekend $599 Jolly Hotel Madison Towers + taxes & fees $119 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 3 nights 3-star accom in Midtown Manhattan. Departs Apr 10/ggv/la. ADD New York helicopter tour from $122.
Paris Starter Package $649 Antin Trinite + taxes & fees $343 INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers, 2 nights central accom with breakfast daily and Paris Seinorama tour. HIGHLIGHTS Palace de la Concorde, Champs Elysees, Arc de Triumphe, Seine River cruise and Eiffel Tower. Departs May 8/ggv/ts.

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Australia 10 Nights $899 Rhapsody of the Seas + taxes & fees $61 INCLUDES 10-night Australia & Barrier Reef cruise sailing roundtrip from Sydney visiting Airlie Beach, Cairns, Port Douglas, Willis Island and Brisbane. Port charges included. Sails Dec 1.
Canada & New England Cruise & Stay $1899 Norwegian Spirit + taxes & fees $240 INCLUDES airfare into Quebec City and return from Boston, 2 nights 3-star accom in Old Québec, 7-day Canada & New England cruise sailing from Quebec City to Boston cruising the Saguenay Fjord visiting Sept Îles Quebec, Charlottetown, Halifax, Portland Maine, plus 2 nights 3-star accom in Boston's Back Bay area. Port charges included. Departs Sep 30.

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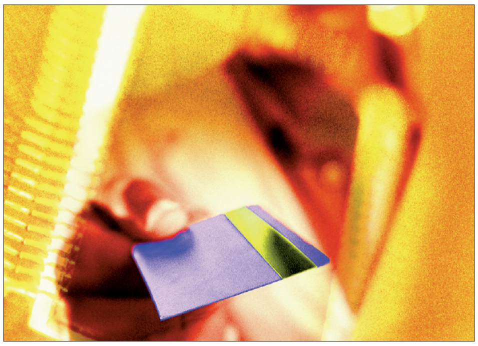
Chip, PIN technology key to fraud-free future

March is fraud prevention month and Canadians are encouraged to become more aware of the dangers of fraud, to learn how to recognize it, report it and stop it.


Canada's conversion to chip technology will take a few years.

Already in wide use around the world, many Canadians are starting to use a new generation of debit and credit payment cards that contain an embedded microchip and use chip and PIN technology.

Canadians shopping with chip cards at chip-enabled store terminals experience only minor differences in the way they pay for goods. Cardholders insert their chip card into the terminal where it remains for the duration of the transaction and follow the prompts provided on the terminal screen before they remove their card. For credit card chip transactions, cardholders enter a PIN, as they do today with debit cards, rather than sign a sales slip.

Why is the chip card better?

Chip cards and chip card terminals work together electronically validating both the card and the cardholder using a PIN. Chip and PIN is the next evolution of electronic payments in Canada, helping to make an already safe credit and debit card payment system even more secure.

"As fraud continues to evolve, we know it's important to continue investing in fraud prevention and detection technology," said Stacy Bennett, RBC's head of Fraud Strategy and Initiatives. "We've also issued over a million chip and PIN cards to our clients giving them enhanced security and peace of mind."

Canada's conversion to chip technology will take a few years to complete because millions of credit and debit cards will have to be replaced with chip cards. At the same time merchants across Canada are converting to terminals capable of processing a chip transaction. For the time being, Canadians will continue to see both "chip and PIN" and "swipe and sign" transactions depending on the terminal used. Chip cards will be issued with a magnetic stripe so that cards can continue to be used around the world in countries that have not yet transitioned to chip and PIN technology.

For more information on RBC's Chip and PIN cards: rbcroyalbank.com/cards/chip

For more information about identity theft and of financial fraud, please visit RBC's Privacy, Security and Fraud website: rbc.com/privacysecurity/ca/index.html

NEWS CANADA

Fraud
Prevention Month

Investing

Allan Small

WILL RETURN ...

Is renting out the condo wise?

Money**Matters**

Henry Choo Chong

metronews.ca/moneymatters

Q Currently, my wife and I own a condo that we bought five years ago. We would like to move into a house and rent the condo. Is this a good idea and are there any tax consequences?

— Eric

A Investing in real estate has made many individuals wealthy. The Canadian real estate markets have experienced phenomenal growth the past years but are currently declining in both price and sales. First-time buyers should not try to predict the market but buy when they can comfortably afford to do so.

Investors should do some research into being a landlord and the tax consequences.

As the condo would be your principal residence at the time you purchase your house, there will no taxes to give to CRA. However, the condo's fair market value would be considered the cost of the condo for calculating capital gains tax on disposition.

Consider some of these issues before investing:

- Talk to your banker about qualifying for financing.
- Are you prepared to be a landlord?
- Can you carry condo expenses for several months if property is vacant or has a bad tenant?
- When and how do you report rental income?
- What must be done when you purchase or sell?
- What are the tax consequences of real estate?
- Is there a difference between commercial or residential property?
- How should you take ownership and how long do you intend to hold investment?

Consult a good real estate lawyer and tax adviser.

Henry Choo Chong, CGA, can be reached at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca and 416-489-7800, ext. 227.

Here's a tip: Where, when, who and how much gratuity to give

Smart**Cookies**

metronews.ca/smartcookies

I once had a server who didn't actually serve me much of anything. I ended up getting my own syrup for my cold pancakes and a glass of juice from the bar. I still left him 15-per-cent gratuity.

It's the former service worker in me that feels like I have to do this to supplement his income. But tipping should be more about the service and in some cases, the relationship you have with the person providing it. Yet there is always confusion. Who, when and how much are all questions that elicit different answers.

Take your barista, for example: Does she automatically get your spare change in her cup? What about the guy who hands you your bag of take-out? Etiquette experts say it's not necessary but recommend that if it is someone you see often, it's a good idea to show appreciation. If, like most people, you have trouble quickly calculating the appropriate amount to tip, visit smartcookies.com for a quick and easy guide.

The norm for restaurant service is 15-20 per cent. If you're in a large group, be sure to check if gratuity is already included, as it often is for large parties. For most other restaurant staff, such as a bar server or checkroom, $1 to $2 is an acceptable tip.

If there are services you are unsure about how much to tip, call ahead and ask what the norm is. In situations where there can be multiple people looking after you, such as a beauty salon or spa, the easiest thing to do is tip about 15-20 per cent on the entire bill and ask that the tip be split between those who attended to you.

When travelling, it's best to keep a bunch of small bills on hand, so that you're prepared and don't feel awkward asking for change or giving more than you wanted to. Be sure to check into the cultural norms wherever you are visiting. As a point of interest, tipping is considered rude and is rarely done in Japan, except in certain cases.

If you happen to be unhappy with the service, never leave zero for a tip without speaking to a manager about the situation. Sometimes it may not have been the person's fault.

Not leaving anything just makes you look cheap and won't solve the problem. You may also receive some kind of compensation for letting them know about the problem so they can fix it.

Tune in Monday nights at 10:30 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

March is Fraud Prevention Month
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Schilling retires via blog

Curt Schilling officially retired from baseball yesterday, announcing on his blog that he's leaving the game after 23 years with "zero regrets." Schilling missed all of last season with a shoulder injury. The gritty pitcher retires with 3,116 strikeouts and three World Series titles with the Diamondbacks and Red Sox. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports

Armstrong breaks collarbone

Lance Armstrong said he will have surgery after breaking his collarbone yesterday during a race in Spain, leaving in question his participation in the Tour de France in July. "I'm alive!" the seven-time Tour de France champ wrote on his Twitter feed. "Broken clavicle (right). Hurts like hell for now." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

EDITOR: JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Habs on the block?

NHL The Montreal Canadiens, already mired in a losing skid that could dash the team's playoff hopes in its centennial season, faced a new bombshell yesterday with a report the storied franchise may be for sale. American George Gillett, who bought the NHL team and the Bell Centre in 2001, has retained financial firms in Canada and around the world to "optimize the value" of his holdings in sports, entertainment and other businesses. That includes the possible sale of the Canadiens, although team president Pierre Boivin said the league's oldest franchise is in no danger of going out of business.

Gillett

"The Gillett family has retained the services of financial advisers to assess various strategic alternatives to optimize the value of its corporate assets," Boivin said in a statement.

Last November, Research In Motion CEO Jim Balsillie said the Canadiens were for sale, but Gillett vehemently denied that at the time.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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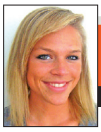
NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Atlanta 109 Minnesota 97
Chicago 101 Washington 99
Miami 94 Memphis 82
Orlando 106 New York 102
Boston 90 L.A. Clippers 77
Denver at Phoenix
Philadelphia at Portland

Level the playing field



Julie Stewart-Binks
Guest columnist

Last December I read a newspaper article that took a shot at good-looking women in sports broadcasting. It maintained physical appearance took precedence over talent.

How depressing! I'd been all athlete all through school, ran track, figure skated, and even spent time in the penalty box after trading punches with a fellow hockey player. I'd covered sports for my university's TV, radio, and print mediums, but darn, I was a woman — and blond at that. There went my credibility as a sports broadcaster. Talk about an unlevel playing field.

Take 60 Minutes commentator Andy Rooney, who, last October, made this unsportsmanlike comment: "What really bugs me about television's coverage is those damn women they have down on the sidelines who don't know what the hell they're talking about."

Many sportscasters hold the same belief. The overly sexualized and hyper-masculine hotbed of sports culture has enforced the idea women don't understand sports.

Speaking of the field: Are there any women on it? To watch TV, listen to radio broadcasts or read the sports pages, you'd never know thousands of little girls in this country play hockey, soccer, baseball and that an even greater percentage of adult females are involved in pro sports.

But scantily clad tennis, figure skating and volleyball athletes get the coverage. When I tell men my career goals they say I'll never fully understand sports because I'll never have the chance to play in the NHL or the NFL. They say men don't want to hear a women talk about a sport she can't play.

So how did Rod Black cover figure skating all those years?

What female sportscasters and female athletes have in common is — to steal a line from Rodney Dangerfield — we get no respect.

I want sports networks to start showing women respect in the hockey arenas, football fields and baseball diamonds, cover our games and tournaments and to hire more women to cover sports.

It's time to level the playing field, boys.

Julie Stewart-Binks is currently a student at Queen's University with hopes of pursuing a career in sports broadcasting.

World Baseball Classic Japan, South Korea for title

KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

Hiroyuki Nakajima of Japan lays down a bunt last night in the first inning of the finals of the 2009 World Baseball Classic against Korea. For a complete recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.

Bosh painted as deadbeat in custody court filings

Chris Bosh is being cast in U.S. court documents as a deadbeat father who broke up with his girlfriend when she was seven months pregnant, leaving her destitute and without medical care even as she fell ill.

The court documents, filed in Maryland on behalf of Bosh's former live-in girlfriend Allison Mathis, who is seeking child support and sole custody, allege that in early 2008 Mathis and Bosh planned to get married.

According to the filings, they made a consensual decision to have a child together and Bosh, who is earning a salary of $14.4 million US this season, paid for a fertility drug to hasten the process.

And not long after Mathis conceived — at last year's NBA all-star weekend in New Orleans, according to a sworn affidavit signed by Mathis — the couple moved into a jointly owned $1.6-million US home in Texas.

But upon Bosh's return from the Beijing Olympics in August of last year, the player signalled his intention to, according to the complaint, "move on" from the relationship.

With Mathis seven months pregnant it is alleged Bosh stopped supporting her financially and attempted to have her removed from their home.

Without money to pay for her obstetrician appointments, Mathis, according to the documents, suffered "breakthrough bleeding and a constantly upset stomach" while utility companies threatened to disconnect her electricity, gas and water.

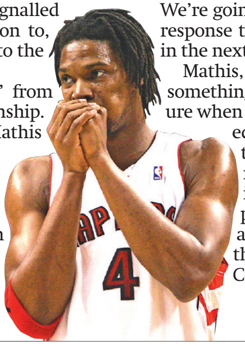
According to the filings, Mathis returned to the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C., to live with her mother, was admitted to hospital due to complications in the pregnancy, and delivered the baby by emergency C-section Nov. 2, 2008.

Four-month-old Trinity Meyers Mathis, according to the court documents, has laid eyes on her father twice, both times in a hotel when the Raptors were in town to face the Wizards.

Bosh, who turns 25 today, did not return a request for comment yesterday. Said Vincent Wills, Bosh's Maryland-based attorney: "Obviously Chris denies all the allegations in the complaint. We're going to be filing our response to the filing within the next week or so."

Mathis, 28, became something of a public figure when LeBron James cited her courtside trash talking as a motivating factor in James' 39-point outburst in a Cleveland win at the Air Canada Centre.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Schools focus on sustainability

Courses designed to meet a growing interest across Canada in green careers

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

The move toward environmental awareness is impacting how companies are doing business, experts say.

In the midst of tough economic times, more companies strive for efficiency and productivity. Individuals employed in Canada's developing sustainability sector are becoming key players in helping businesses balance those goals with the eco-friendly demands of their clients.

"There is a heightened consumer or pubic awareness of environmental issues," says Michael Kerford, vice-president of ECO Canada.

"Often, people know what the environment is as an issue, but don't translate that into employment opportunity."

The Calgary-based company, founded in 1992, provides resources for job hunters, employers, teachers and students who are interested in environmentalism and sustainability. Currently, Kerford says ECO Canada operates one of the largest environmental job boards in the country.

He also says that its membership has reached more than 100,000 people. This all points to an increasing interest in green careers.

"With the environment being a key issue ... it is impacting how companies are doing business," says Kerford. "Inevitably, that greening of the company is creating environmental work."

Although Kerford says the hiring of people in this industry may slow down because of the recession, he says the diversity of positions available will only continue to grow.

Diana McKenzie, program leader for the Centre for Sustainability at the University of British Columbia, says sustainability is no longer seen as a trend. It is instead viewed as a viable career path for those who want to make a difference.

"It's becoming part of all institutions, both private and public," she says.

Launched in January, UBC's continuing education sustainability management program filled up quickly. In the fall, it will also begin a con-ed certificate program on decision making for climate change.

McKenzie says both courses will help students understand the concepts of sustainability and environmentalism and how they can be applied in the working world.

"It's one thing to read a book on sustainability, but how do you actually take those concepts and integrate them into your business plan?" she says.

This fall, Gavin Trevelyan will be among the first group of students enrolled in Ryerson University's new sustainability certificate program at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education. He says he's excited to learn more about sustainability issues.

"It's about the opportunity to make a living doing something that you can have a good night's sleep about," says Trevelyan. "It's an attractive idea as opposed to just doing something conventional."

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Inside
Corporate trainer balances two careers with the help of George Brown College

Adventure in the air

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Look up in the sky. Look past the birds, around the clouds and you might just see it.

For some, that jumbo jet soaring high above the ground symbolizes travel, excitement and adventure. But for others it signals the start of an equally thrilling career as a commercial pilot.

"There's tons of romanticism behind it, but above all, it's a really good job," says David Huber, the chief flight instructor for Canadian Flyers. "It's about a love of flying."

The Canadian Flyers' commercial pilot licence program gives students 40 hours of ground instruction and more than 200 hours of training in the cockpit. They also operate out of three airports: Markham, Lake Simcoe, and Toronto City Centre. Before enrolling, however, students must complete the school's private pilot licence program.

Huber says that journey to become a commercial pilot was more rigourous than even he expected upon entering the industry.

"It was a misconception to me as well when I first started," he says. "But you get put through the hoops and hurdles to get into the airline industry."

Some of those hoops and hurdles include juggling large amounts of homework, passing Transport Canada-certified flight examinations, and successfully completing a health test officiated by a Transport Canada medical examiner.

"You're constantly being trained and constantly being tested because it is the industry standard," says Huber.

Norma Columbus is the program co-ordinator for technology continuing education and training at Seneca College. She helps oversee the school's part-time aviation certificate program, which is offered as part of its continuing education repertoire.

"Not everyone has that much time to devote to their education," says Columbus, who adds that many of the program's students are working outside the classroom. "Keeping in mind with the theme of lifelong learning, this program can help give students what they need."

This program, intended for aspiring commercial pilots, is also a joint venture with Toronto Airways. The former provides in-class training while the latter organizes in-air practice at Buttonville Airport.

Columbus admits the price tag attached to commercial aviation studies is hefty. Some programs can run between $50,000 and $60,000. That means students who enrol must be committed both from a financial standpoint and from an educational one.

"There have to be good study skills because the exams are quite arduous," she says. "It's a very structured and high-discipline profession because of the safety aspect. It's not something where you just put your bum in the seat."

> **"It's a very structured and high-discipline profession because of the safety aspect."**
> Norma Columbus

Seneca College offers a part-time aviation certificate program in a joint venture with Toronto Airways.

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U of T eyes local poets

ERIC EMIN WOOD
for Metro Canada

If you like poetry, or are interested in learning more about it, Margaret Christakos would love to hear from you.

A 20-year veteran of the Toronto poetry scene, Christakos created Influency: A Toronto Poetry Salon for the University of Toronto's school of continuing studies to reach members of the public who might be intrigued by poetry, but don't know where to begin. "A lot of people feel like they just don't get it," she says.

The salon takes place over a period of 10 weeks. During the first class, Christakos meets students and introduces the eight Toronto-based poets they will be studying. Past guests have included Griffin prize nominee Karen Solie and former Toronto poet laureate Dennis Lee.

During subsequent evenings, a guest poet-critic gives a 40-minute talk on the poet being studied, which is followed by a half-hour reading by the featured poet. Later, the poet-critic will return as the featured poet, meaning each of the guest poets visit twice. "You get to know them quite well," says Christakos.

"It's very exciting because after the first few weeks people realize, 'Oh, wow, this isn't hard at all. It's actually really interesting,'" Christakos says.

So far, more than 40 poets have taken part. This year's guests include Governor General's award nominee Ken Babstock and novelist M. NourbeSe Philip.

"Poetry really is for the general public," Christakos says. "It can illuminate our lives. Many of us just need a hand through the door."

Influency: a Toronto Poetry Salon runs from April 1 until June 3.

For the love of art

EVA LAM
for Metro Canada

From accountants to art teachers, novices to semi-professionals, students of every stripe can be found taking fine arts courses through continuing education in Toronto.

"We do get some people who are actually artists, but, for the most part, people are taking it out of general interest," says Munir Noormohamed, chair of the fine arts program at George Brown College. "It's a great way for people who have nine-to-five jobs to do something different in the evenings or on the weekends."

Students can choose from nearly three dozen courses at George Brown, ranging from the ever-popular foundation design and drawing courses to newer additions, such as sculpting, mural painting and children's book illustration.

Noormohamed says the majority of the students will eventually apply their courses toward one of four fine arts certificates offered at the school: Drawing, introductory fine arts, painting or sculpture.

One such student is Jamie Lynch, who graduated from the college's full-time graphic design program in 1995. Now working in digital media in the newspaper publication industry, he returned to George Brown four years ago to hone his talents in the more creative side of arts and design.

"I'm doing it because I love art and I like to paint."
Jamie Lynch

"I'm doing it because I love art and I like to paint," says Lynch, who recently had some of his artwork displayed at the Steam Whistle Gallery. "You can learn off every artist, (so) it's nice to be in a room with people who have the same interest."

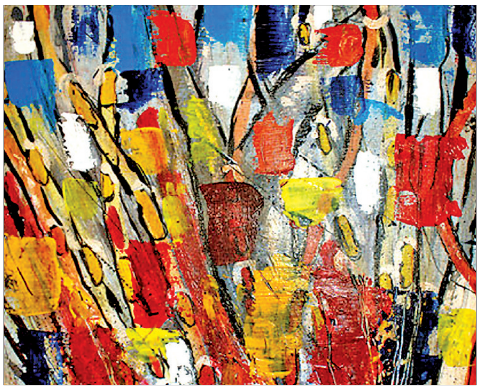
Lynch is also looking forward to the opening of a separate fine arts building at George Brown later this year, a move that will give part-time students the option of attending day classes.

Sheridan College offers its own unique set of drawing and painting courses, which students can apply toward a certificate in fine arts.

One of the school's most popular courses is landscape painting with Len Aguanno, says program coordinator John Parker. In warmer weather, instructor Aguanno will take his students out to various locations around the Oakville campus for outdoor lessons. "They might drive down a country road — there could be farm animals, could be cows — and they'll sit and they'll draw," says Parker.

As with George Brown, most of Sheridan's fine arts students are people looking for an outlet to explore their creativity, says Parker.

"We've got accountants who are learning to draw because they've been working with numbers all day," he says. "(When) drawing a human figure or a still life, they find it so rewarding because it's so different from number crunching."



ARTWORK BY JAMIE LYNCH/PAINTINGSBYJAMIELYNCH.BLOGSPOT.COM

This abstract painting as well as two portraits, below left, were created by Jamie Lynch during his studies at George Brown.

Bead boutique offers hands-on courses

LEYLA EMORY
for Metro Canada

Three women wearing safety glasses and wielding torches is not what you'd expect to find in the back of the otherwise dainty bead boutique La Perlerie. Until you see the small colourful glass creations at the end of the flame.

Since January, La Perlerie has been offering glass bead making classes.

"To make a glass bead you have to bring the glass to a molten state, or a honey-like consistency, and drip it over a stainless steel rod," says Susan Nagy, owner of La Perlerie. "You need a torch. I have four torches. Each person gets a torch and it's a three-hour course that teaches you how to make your own glass bead."

The intimate group gets hands-on instruction from Nadia Tasci, a renowned flame-working artist. "She's Toronto-based and has been doing this for almost 10 years," says Nagy. "She's very well-known in the glass bead making industry, so it's a privilege for us to have her here."

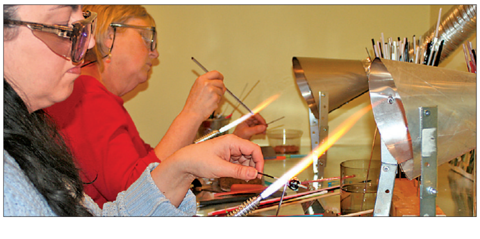
Tasci talks her students through the intricate process of creating and decorating their own glass bead. "Heat it up in certain spots. And now shape it. Manipulate it. Go for it," she says, cheering them on.

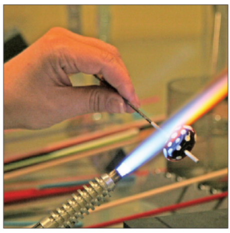
"If you're positive when you're making something, you're going to have better results," says Tasci. "I want (students) to have as much fun as possible and I want them to feel excited about it the way I'm excited about it."

It's working. "I have to say Nadia is fantastic," says student Marnie Hillier. "It makes a difference because I'm not a natural at this. She's very patient and she's a good teacher." Hillier, a loyal customer, first read about the course in emails La Perlerie sent out.

Although "complete novices can come in and take a course," Nagy says, students of the bead making class are usually already into the craft. "People who are into jewelry making and design sometimes get a little tired of the standard materials like a round bead. Making your own bead is a very organic process and it really differentiates your piece," she says.

Beyond glass bead making, La Perlerie offers classes on jewelry making techniques using semi-precious stones, wood beads or wire, which can accommodate up to 15 people. "The store is more focused on fashion and jewelry design. We work on making larger pieces that are more fashion oriented," says Nagy. "More chunky, funky, bold pieces of jewelry."





PHOTOS BY LEYLA EMORY/FOR METRO CANADA

Students make glass beads during a course offered at La Perlerie.

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ERIC EMIN WOOD
for Metro Canada

It's easy to forget, but like Canada, York University was originally founded as a bilingual institution.

Today, that spirit is preserved at its founding campus, Glendon, which remains a prime destination for students interested in learning French.

"We're Toronto's best-kept secret," says Susanne Holunga, director of Glendon's extended learning department. "Not a lot of people know about us."

Students enrol in Glendon's extended learning French courses for various reasons. "A lot of our clientele come in because they're travelling," Holunga says. "Or they want a job with the federal government, or their children may be in French immersion and they want to communicate with them and help with their homework."

The department offers three levels of French instruction: Beginner, intermediate, and advanced. There's also "French conversation," for advanced speakers, and "perfect your French," which focuses on writing.

> **"We're Toronto's best-kept secret."**
> Susanne Holunga

Regardless of the course, lessons are activity-based, and bear little resemblance to the rote learning many Canadians remember from high school. "The focus of our program is communicative," says Holunga. "Out of the activity comes the grammar, so the teacher will focus on practising the language, and grammar, by the way."

Like all courses at Glendon, class sizes are small — most are between eight to 10 students, Holunga says — and students meet once a week, on Saturdays.

The school offers other language courses, including Arabic and Cantonese.

"Right now we're teaching Italian," Holunga says. "If enough students phone in and want a specific language, we'll set up the class for that.

"Learning a language is a lot of work," says Holunga. "At first it's fun, but you have to decide whether you have the stamina to stay with it."

For more information, visit glendon.yorku.ca.

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE PHOTOS

Centennial College is seeing enrolment in its motorcycle riding and maintenance courses, below, skyrocket.

Kick-start your riding skills

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

If pocket rockets rev your engine, you've probably been bitten by the motorcycle bug.

Of course, you need to learn how to tame the beast before you can hop on — and it might help if you know how to fix the darn thing.

Linda Neil, chair of the school of Continuing Education at Centennial College, says the school is seeing skyrocketing numbers of people taking motorcycle riding and maintenance certification courses, something she believes could be in large part due to recent gas prices and the tough economy.

"People are saying, 'I can't drive anymore. I've got to find a cheaper way of transportation,'" Neil said.

For would-be riders, Centennial offers motorcycle rider training over a weekend, starting with in-class learning on Friday night followed by full Saturday and Sunday sessions on the pavement. At the end, students are tested to get an M2 licence.

Classes are capped at 30 students per session and students must already possess an M1 licence to take the course, though the school provides the training bike. A dress code is in effect, so come wearing a long-sleeved leather or denim jacket, thick full-length trousers, and a heavy boot that covers the ankle and has a strong heel — cowboy boots fit the bill, if you really want to get in the spirit of things.

Experienced riders who already have their own bike can take the M2 exit training course, which also runs for a weekend and ends with a test for the full M licence.

Owning a bike is one thing, but keeping it running is another. For that reason, Centennial offers a series of six 15-hour courses as part of its motorcycle maintenance certificate, teaching participants all about the finer points of motorcycle engines, chassis and electronics.

Neil says the course is popular with car mechanics who want to expand their repertoire, as well as riders who just want to know how to get their own bike out of a pinch.

"A lot of rider training students will take these courses just so they can fix their own bike," she said.

The rider training courses are all approved by the Canada Safety Council and the focus is always on safety.

"A lot of people have this idea that you jump on a bike and it's pretty simple, but I think students are humbled by what they need to know to drive a motorcycle," Neil said.

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Employees turning to education

Onus now on individual to build job skills: Experts

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Continuing education programs can be offered in-class or online through distance learning.

In uncertain economic times, continuing education programs can be a pillar of career-building strength, but only if people take the initiative themselves, experts say.

Andrew Cochrane, president of the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) and dean of the College of Continuing Education at Dalhousie University, says as employers tighten their belts, they are less likely to front money for employees to get advanced training. The onus gets placed on individuals to search out continuing education programs that enhance their skills and fund that training on their own.

"The employer is not paying as much now for training employees as the individual is," Cochrane said.

Marilynn Booth, director of the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto and former president of CAUCE, says that as a result of less corporate-funded education, schools need to work harder than ever to offer meaningful, effective programs to attract enterprising students.

"The need for continuing education increases as people feel more threatened in their work lives. The onus is on continuing education providers to be on the leading edge and build programs that serve the needs of the future," Booth said.

Cochrane says enrolments in continuing education programs are up across Canada. That's because learning institutions of all types generally do well in weakened economies as people try to retrain for new careers.

What is worrying, he says, is that many of the people being laid off in the downturn had just started their careers and were expected to succeed aging baby boomers as they retired, leaving an impending leadership void once those boomers leave the workforce.

Cochrane says many companies are just not training enough young leaders to take over the roost.

"We were in bad shape before with succession planning and we're going to be worse off in the future," Cochrane said.

While the Internet has had a profound impact on how education takes place, Cochrane says it hasn't replaced in-class learning — rather, it has strengthened it. He sees a trend in older students taking continuing education courses online as well as fewer recreational students doing it just for fun.

"When distance education came about, there were people saying, 'That's the end of the face-to-face classes.' Well that's clearly not the case. Online learning facilitates flexibility but the composition of who's online is changing as well," Cochrane said.

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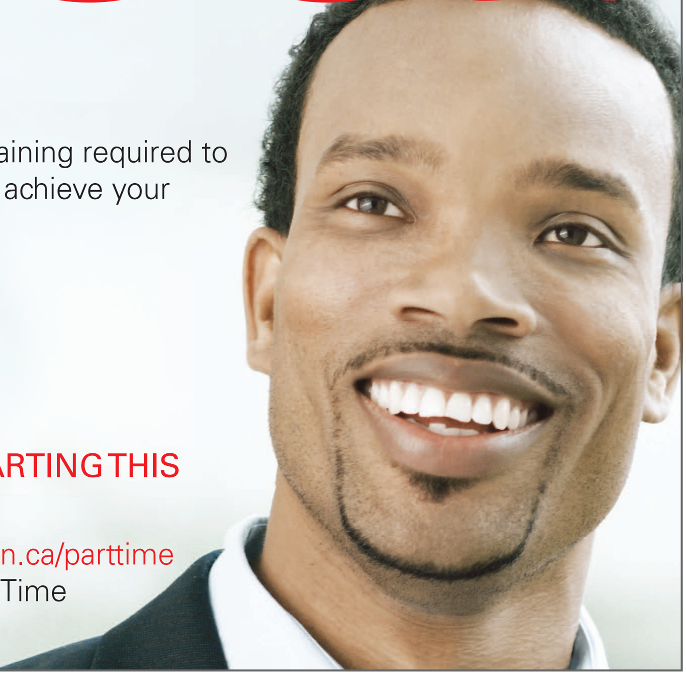

Sow seeds of knowledge

LEYLA EMORY
for Metro Canada

After more than 35 years of service as an intelligence officer in the air force, retired lieutenant-colonel Susan Beharriell is turning her attention to the ground — more specifically, her garden.

George Brown College offers a range of gardening courses.

Beharriell is one of what instructor Frank Kershaw calls “the hobbyists” studying gardening at George Brown.

“They just want a great garden at home,” says Kershaw. “Others are potentially thinking of a career change. They’d like to get into gardening. Then there are people who just have a general interest. They may have retired or may have more time on their hands. There’s a lot more do-it-yourselfers now.”

The program caters to all. “It covers a base level understanding up to doing plants et cetera,” says Kershaw of the two-year-old garden design certificate offered in partnership with the Toronto Botanical Gardens. Students are required to complete four compulsory courses and one of two (soon to be three) electives.

The program’s alignment with the Toronto Botanical Gardens allows for a mixing of experts and novices. “The TBG has a wonderful horticultural library, new gardens as well as members and interested parties. I think it’s nice to have a community college in that sort of relationship,” says Kershaw. His new course in the fall will be taught at the 777 Lawrence Ave. E. location.

While the program appeals to people with different ambitions and expertise in gardening, it also caters to their needs. Container gardening “is very popular with city gardeners,” says Kershaw. “It’s very valuable for people who have a balcony or townhouse garden.”

Similarly, edible gardening in the city is a hit because “it’s very environmental and ecological, which is important now,” Kershaw says. “Growing vegetables and fruits also aligns well with George Brown’s culinary pursuits, which are so popular.”

For Beharriell, who lives outside of Toronto, city limitations aren’t a problem. “I have two acres so I thought I would learn to (garden) properly.”

In her case, basic garden design was enough. “This was a personal development aimed at designing my own garden and I know have the sufficient tools to do that,” she says.

In the spring, Beharriell will get started on the garden she designed with the help of Kershaw and her peers. “The Toronto regional conservation authority will be coming in a matter of weeks to plant trees and shrubs for the birds and the bees,” she says. “I’m putting in a water feature pond, again for the birds and the wildlife.”

> **“(The container gardening course) is very popular with city gardeners. It’s very valuable for people who have a balcony or townhouse garden.”** Frank Kershaw

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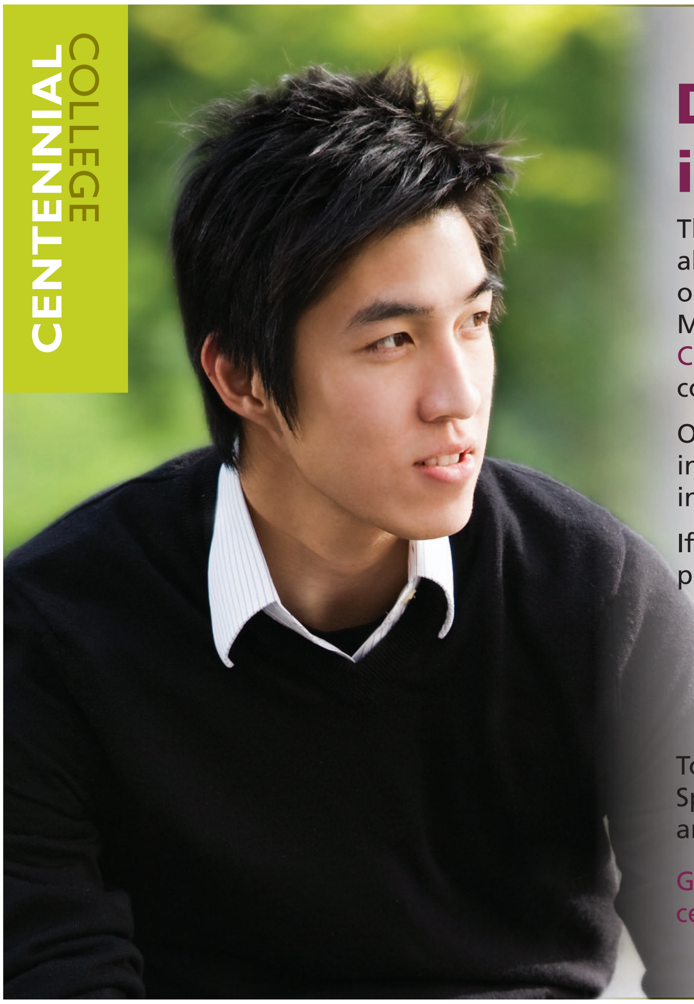
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Wedding planning course not just for brides

EVA LAM
for Metro Canada

Three years ago, Susy José was going through the motions at a nine-to-five receptionist's job and trying to figure out her next step in life. As she perused the Humber College website one day, she came across what would become the doorway to her dream profession.

SUSY JOSÉ PHOTO

Susy José in her new role after taking a wedding planning course at Humber College.

"I saw it right there in front of me — it just said: 'Brand-new course: Wedding planning,'" she recalls. "I thought it seemed like a really fun thing to try, even if I didn't make a career out of it."

José enrolled in the course and, over 15 weeks, she learned about what it takes to be a professional wedding planner, from organizing an engagement party on a budget to overseeing the big day itself.

"It was so interesting to see how much goes into it," she says. "(It) made me want to continue my education and experience in event planning."

"In the class, I have people who are getting married, I have mothers of the bride, I have people who want a career change." Melissa Samborski, instructor

The wedding planning course attracts people for a variety of reasons, says Melissa Samborski, who developed and teaches the course at Humber.

"In the class, I have people who are getting married, I have mothers of the bride, I have people who want a career change," she says.

The 45-hour course, which is also offered online, covers all elements of the wedding from the engagement to the honeymoon, including such details as etiquette, gifts, catering and more. Students also learn how to start and market their own wedding planning businesses.

UPPERCUT IMAGES

In the course, students learn how to start and market their own wedding planning businesses, as well as the elements of a wedding, including catering, etiquette, gifts and more.

Samborski, who is the owner of One Fine Day, an event planning company in Toronto, says wedding planners have an important role in today's society. "Because couples today are older, they're career established," she says. "They need help to plan their day because they don't have the time to do it."

Although the course does not carry a certificate or wedding planner designation, José came away from it inspired to learn more about the field. She obtained an event and meeting management certificate from George Brown College and now works as an event planner specializing in weddings for a Toronto-based entertainment company. She has a wedding planning business on the side and already has about 15 weddings under her belt.

José's education is also coming in handy for a more personal venture — her own wedding in June. "I got engaged and I knew everything I wanted in a matter of three months," she says.

The bride-to-be is managing all aspects of the wedding herself, with one exception. "For the day of, I did hire somebody to take care of everything for me," she says with a laugh. "I don't want to worry about anything then!"

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Half of McGill medical school grads leave Quebec

According to new data from the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, 52 per cent of recent medical graduates from McGill University were working outside of Quebec, with 22 per cent settling in Ontario. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Workology

Free tuition?

In order to recruit the best and brightest students, Trent University is offering free tuition to first-year students with a high school grade average of 90 per cent and higher.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Wine without the snobbery

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

For some consumers, wine is the ammo of pre-drinking and dinner parties. For others, it's the right synthesis of colour, nose, fruit, acid, tannin and end. But for the team of Angela Aiello and Paxton Allewell, it's a calling.

The Toronto-based duo, both 26, believes in striking a balance between wine as a source for inebriation and as a drink just for connoisseurs with its initiative iYellow Wine Club (phonetically named for a licence plate on Aiello's uncle's yellow mustang).

"Toronto's hottest social wine club," dubbed by the pair, offers affordable social wine events and tours plus online wine-appreciation content, included with a free membership.

To achieve their aim, Aiello and Allewell focus on people between the ages of 24 and 39, motivated by Aiello's desire to enjoy wine outside the traditionally "older" wine generation with people her own age; an untapped demographic.

"It's become this urban hot thing, to go to a wine event, because not only are you learning about wine but you're meeting great people that are potentially single or could help you get a job and network."

Aiello calls wine a "social lubricant," which is why iYellow Wine Club places equal emphasis on the liquor as the liaisons, sans intimidation.

> **"What we try to do is teach people a sense of wine confidence."** Angela Aiello

"People really want to learn but don't want to have a sommelier teach them," she says. "They want to just be taught by someone, but not someone that's talking wine jargon."

And while the pair hails themselves as hosts of all events, neither has official education in wine stewardship. Despite their combined 12 years of industry experience, Aiello says a lot of people think their lack of related formal education is a weakness.

"I really don't want to be a sommelier," she insists. "I think that's what really scares people about wine, in general — that they have to know everything to know something, and they don't. What we try to do is teach people a sense of wine confidence."

Aiello is confident iYellow Wine Club could spread internationally, particularly given noted wine followings in locales like California and the over 3,000 members iYellow boasts, which Aiello says were attracted without push. But with low-cost events and no-cost memberships, she says her and Allewell continue to struggle with turning wine into wealth.

"From a small business perspective, the biggest challenge I have found, is transferring my passion into a business model," she says. "I don't want (an iYellow event) to be like every other wine event where you're paying $80 to $110 to come and try some wine. I want wine to be what Coke is for everybody. It's something that should be enjoyed."

Angela Aiello and Paxton Allewell aim to teach people about wine in a way that makes them comfortable with iYellow Wine Club.

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RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

EDUCATION If you have a strong heart for justice and want to help lay down the law, a career shift into law enforcement might just be for you.

The Law Enforcement Administration program offered by Newfoundland career college Academy Canada trains students for careers as military police, private investigators, security guards and officers, jailors and other jobs in law enforcement.

According to Service Canada, employment in law enforcement and security related fields is expected to grow much faster than the national average for other occupations due to concerns about crime and vandalism as well as inevitable business investment as the economy moves on.

It just goes to show that no matter what the economic conditions are like, people are always needed to help protect property and the public itself from people who would try to take criminal advantage of others.

The program at Academy Canada also leads to potential careers with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and private sector employment with agencies like the Brinks Armoured Car Service, as long as students fulfill any application, entrance and training requirements for such employers.

If you are thinking of a career in the field, however, forget clichéd images of gruff, tough-guy mannerisms and Hollywood-style action. Real law enforcement work requires a strong character and a real desire to do good.

For more information, visit academycanada.com

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Ryerson to vote on fee increase for athletic centre
Last week, students at Ryerson University voted in a referendum to boost fees to go towards the construction of a new $30-million athletic centre. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Statistics can be made to say anything: Prof

Lecture series

BRIAN TOWIE
for Metro Canada

When Merv Mosher lectures at York, he makes sure his students are always skeptical about the source when considering studies that release statistics.

Merv Mosher is sure that there are a strong percentage of people who are misled by statistics.

Time for him to change up the trend. The York University professor of kinesiology and health sciences will lecture on the importance of number-crunching during his lecture Statistics: What's the Point? — airing Sunday, March 29 on TVO's Big Ideas as part of that show's Ontario's Best Lecturer competition.

"The purpose of statistics is to bring order out of chaos," he said. "In today's world, we're drowning in data, and it's all too easy to be fooled or misinformed."

Of course, there is the argument that many factoids and findings that see the light of day especially ones that make headlines or newswires, may not be entirely accurate. Mosher admits that some studies are conducted in contrived environments and numbers may be fudged to determine a certain desired conclusion. In some reports, the answer was there before the statistics were even compiled, cleverly disguised as a public service — a form of aducation or advertorial as the case may be.

"I always tell my students this: You must always be skeptical," he said. "Consider the source: Any group that has some sort of agenda will invariably highlight information that serves their interests. This is even true of universities as the private sector becomes more involved with them. And besides that, these are accurate representatives only of what has been examined. There are absolutes versus relatives to consider."

There are questions you must ask before you get any kind of information from a source, Mosher notes, and these questions can help you separate the truth from the sales pitch.

"It depends on what you study," he said. "What's the source? Is it for profit and if so, who stands to profit from you having this information? Is the data recent? Is it based on current research? There may be a general intent of an article or report, a direction in which it tries to move you. You should be aware of it."

What about the money?

SURVEY Job interviewees reluctant to discuss compensation with hiring managers during tough times are getting a green light from employers, a new survey shows.

More than half of senior executives (56 per cent) surveyed said they are comfortable with applicants broaching the subject in the first or second interview. In fact, approximately two-thirds (66 per cent) of executives indicated they most commonly discuss the subject by the second interview, with 19 per cent saying it usually comes up during the first interview.

The Accountemps survey was conducted by an independent research firm and is based on interviews with senior executives from 1,000 companies.

"While employers and job applicants don't have to agree on a final figure right away, general salary requirements should be discussed early in the hiring process to avoid surprises later on," said Max Messmer, chairman of Accountemps. "When inquiring about salary for the first time, job seekers should be prepared to hear a broad range too."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Cut calories to lose weight

Eat heart-healthy foods in smaller portions, reports study

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

Forget the grapefruit diet. Forget eating bacon and eggs but no bread. The best way to lose weight is not to eliminate foods, but simply to eat less altogether.

That is the conclusion of a new study published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine.

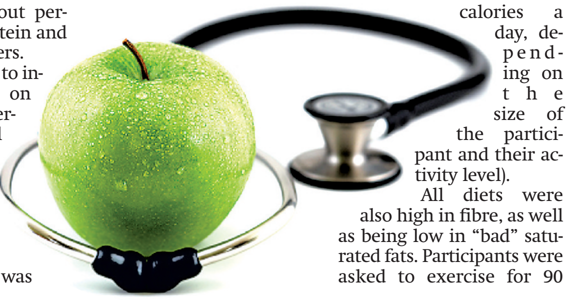
As long as you eat heart-healthy foods — such as less meat and more veggies, legumes and fish — in smaller portions, you don't need to worry about percentages of fat, protein and carbs, say researchers.

"Diets … tailored to individual patients on the basis of their personal and cultural preferences may have the best chance for long-term success," reported the authors.

The study, which was funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health, took place at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and at Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge, La.

Here's how the study was done: It enrolled 811 people between the ages of 30 and 70, and monitored them from October 2004 through December 2007. The subjects were all either overweight or obese — with a BMI between 25 and 40.

Participants were divided into four diet groups — one that received a low fat, average protein diet; one that received a low fat, high protein diet; one that received a high fat, average protein diet; and, finally, one that received a high fat, high protein diet. What the four diets had in common is that they were all low in calories (typically between 1,400 and 2,000 calories a day, depending on the size of the participant and their activity level).



"Diets … tailored to individual patients on the basis of their personal and cultural preferences may have the best chance for long-term success."
Study authors

All diets were also high in fibre, as well as being low in "bad" saturated fats. Participants were asked to exercise for 90 minutes a week, and all were offered regular counselling sessions.

It turned out that it didn't matter which diet they followed, as results were similar for all four. On average, participants lost about 13 pounds over the first six months. After that, some weight came back, but after two years they had still lost an average of nine pounds and taken two inches off their waists.

The main message is that dieting should be simple, say the authors. All you have to do is choose healthy foods and minimize calories. Don't worry about what percentage of fat, protein and carbs you are eating.

Authors called for improved disclosure of calorie counts in prepared foods.

ISTOCK PHOTO

A new study says dieting should be simple: Choose healthy foods and minimize calories.

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Certified organic?

How to be assured a beauty product is living up to its claims

DIANE PETERS
for Metro Canada

ISTOCK PHOTO

To ensure cosmetic products are organic, check for a certification logo on the label.

When you buy makeup, lotion or shampoo labelled "organic," how do you know that it's guaranteed not to contain synthetic chemicals and that its plant-based ingredients were grown without fertilizers or pesticides?

Check to see that it has a certification logo on the label. On a few Canadian products, you'll see the Ecocert or Certech stamps — two private labels from for-profit companies. On imported goods you might see Ecocert, or a stamp from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the U.K.'s Soil Association. A "BDIH" seal shows that the cosmetic was certified natural by the Association of German Industries and Trading Firms.

Under federal government Organic Products Regulations (slated to go into effect this June), agricultural products with "organic" claims must be certified, and certification will be standardized. But cosmetics certification will remain voluntary and in private hands. Cosmetics could be included sometime in the future, but not any time soon, according to the Canadian Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association.

ECOCERT Since 2002, Ecocert Canada, a division of France-based Ecocert, has certified three Canadian companies: Cargo Cosmetics, Cosmaceutical Research Lab and Druide. Any approved products must contain 95 per cent plant-based organic ingredients and the remaining five per cent must be from Ecocert's list of acceptable substances. Ecocert also recognizes natural products. For these, 50 per cent of the plant-based ingredients must be organic and five per cent of the overall product must be organic. "We verify the ingredients and what's written on the label, and we do at least one inspection a year," says France Gravel, director of Ecocert Canada, which charges $5,000 and up to assess a product line.

CERTECH Over a year ago, Certech Registration, a Canadian company, created a standard for cosmetics that requires 95 per cent organic ingredients and excellent quality management systems at a company's factories.

"We look at the entire process," says Brian Lane, president of Certech, which has been doing quality assurance certification for various industries since 1987. "We want to know where the ingredients were grown and that the company has the correct controls in place." It only approves products not tested on animals and packaged in recyclable containers.

Costs vary depending on the size of the operation, but it is typically between $2,000 and $8,000 for an entire product line (annual retesting of products can run up to $3,000 a year).

Thus far, Certech has approved d'Avicenna, the only Canadian cosmetics company to go through its certification process. D'Avicenna president Shahin Kalantari says it was a big challenge to make the company's product without using chemical emulsifiers and preservatives.

For now, any reference to "organic" or "natural" on a cosmetic product label — unless it has a certifier's stamp — could mean anything. The product may well be what it claims to be. Or it could be that the closest whiff it's had to nature was on the truck ride from the factory.

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Barbie as a role model

Despite her bad rep, the famous doll taught us valuable sex ed

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

metronews.ca/thejspot

ISTOCK PHOTO

Sexual experimentation with Barbie was all about exploring those wonderfully vague, unformed feelings of early adolescence.

Barbie turned 50 this year and, while I doubt we're going to see a "Menopause Barbie" on the market any time soon, I think the doll's reputation as a poor role model for young women is not entirely deserved.

Women learned a lot from Barbie, especially when it came to sex. In fact, Barbie was the first sexually liberated woman I knew. She was the star of her own show with Ken as a mere sidekick — available whenever Barbie desired male company.

Sexual experimentation with Barbie was all about exploring those wonderful ly vague, unformed, okay-I-know-this-feels-good-but-I-don't-really-get-it feelings of early adolescence.

As Christine told me, "I remember my Ken and Barbie necking, and I know I had Ken lie naked on top of Barbie. But I pretty much left it at that — I think I didn't know what to do next."

Clearly some of us were a little more sexually advanced than others.

"Our Barbies and Kens were usually bi-sexual, with multiple partners over brief periods of time," AB tells me. "There was foreplay, orgasms — everything." AB says her "sophisticated" Barbie play might have had something to do with the fact that she played with Barbies until she was 14.

Some women even practiced responsible Barbie sex. Susan's Barbie was a secretary, she tells me. "At one point I had her getting ready to go into her male boss' office. I remember knowing that Ken-boss man was going to put the moves on her and making sure that my Barbie grabbed a birth control pill from her desk drawer and popped it before going in to his office. I have no idea how I knew about birth control."

> **"Barbie was the first sexually liberated woman I knew... Ken (was) a mere sidekick — available whenever Barbie desired male company."**

Okay, maybe she had a few things to learn about office sexual politics, but Barbie did teach us a few things about the harsh realities of dating.

"Barbies were like today's 30-somethings in the world of dating: A bunch of really good-looking dolls all vying for the attention of one guy — and all the time not realizing he doesn't even have a decent package," laughs Sylvia.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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Wyatt’s Warriors

Raising awareness of congenital heart defects

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

Wyatt isn’t an ordinary little boy. He was born with several severe congenital heart defects and has been fighting for his life ever since.

Wyatt has spent 20 of his 23 months at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

In this time, he has had an unimaginable five open heart surgeries, three cardiac catheterizations, and a tracheotomy. He was only 20 days old when he had his first open heart surgery.

“He is an amazingly strong and brave little boy who has a smile that would light up any room, and has taught us more about life, love and strength than anyone else I have ever met in my life,” says his aunt Laura Celsie, who has established a charity in his name, Wyatt’s Warriors, to raise awareness of congenital heart defects, as well as money for Sick Kids Hospital and Wyatt’s care.

Celsie paints a picture of what it is like for families with babies who have a congenital heart defect. “It’s brutal. We’ve seen a lot of kids pass away,” she says. Her sister Lisa — Wyatt’s mom — has never left Wyatt’s side. “She has totally dedicated her life to him and fighting for him since the day he was born.” Lisa has given up her marriage, her home, her pets, her job and lives either at the hospital or Ronald McDonald House.

Congenital heart defects (meaning heart problems that are present at birth) are relatively common; they affect one in every 70 newborns in Canada. They are far more prevalent than Down syndrome, which affects one in every 800 births.

Much more should be done to screen for congenital heart defects, says Celsie. If screening was better, families would be able to prepare for having a child with a heart defect. In some cases, medical intervention can help reverse the problem.

When Wyatt was diagnosed just after birth, the family didn’t know anything about congenital heart defects, and couldn’t find much information. It’s a big contrast to the wealth of information available about cancer. “Congenital heart defects kill twice as many children as all childhood cancers combined, yet there is no funding for research, public awareness or prevention,” says Celsie, who is from Whitby, Ont.

Last April, when he should have been enjoying his first birthday, Wyatt underwent three heart surgeries in one month. In February this year, the family was told that there was nothing more that can be done for Wyatt surgically.

“Now we are just enjoying life with him, and teaching him new things, and trying to get them home. He enjoys pudding, both eating it and painting with it, and loves cheesecake. He plays with a bedfull of balls, and just this week got to go outside for a walk for the first time in over a year,” says Celsie. He blows kisses. “These are really little things, but when you see what we’ve been through, they’re big things.”

Going for a walk is a huge undertaking since it requires several people to help. Wyatt uses a special wheelchair/stroller and everywhere he goes he takes with him a feeding pump, a suction machine, oxygen, a ventilator and an oximeter — a medical device that measures oxygen in the blood.

Will Wyatt be able to enjoy his second birthday on April 27? “I don’t know,” says Celsie. “We are hoping to have a birthday party for him.”

SUPPLIED PHOTO

Young Wyatt has spent 20 of his 23 months fighting a congenital heart defect that affects one in every 70 newborns in Canada.

Charity golf

- Wyatt’s Warriors second annual charity golf tournament is coming up on June 6, 2009. For more information, contact wyatts-warriors@hotmail.com.

Fat neck signals heart disease?

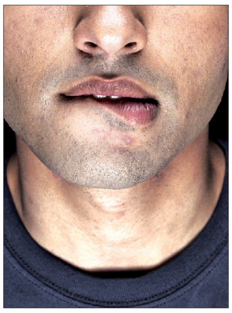
CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

RESEARCH Do you have a thick neck? One day your doctor might measure your neck to gage your risk of developing heart disease.

Researchers in the U.K. found that men and women with thicker necks tended to have higher blood glucose and lower levels of HDL, or “good” cholesterol. High blood sugar and low HDL are both risk factors for heart disease.

They said that measuring neck size may be as predictive for heart disease as measuring the waist.

Results were presented at the recent American Heart Association Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention meeting in Florida.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Weight loss scams

Doctors warn against cleansing, diet pills

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

If a weight loss program sounds too good to be true, it probably is, say obesity doctors. The best way to lose weight is gradually through healthy eating and regular exercise.

When it comes to weight loss, buyer beware.

If you are dieting, cleansing, popping diet pills, injecting vitamin B or entering a weight loss program, use the old adage: "If it seems too good to be true, it is too good to be true."

Many commercial weight loss providers feed off people's desperation and trick them with false claims such as "lose 40 pounds in four weeks," according to two obesity doctors who recently wrote a warning in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

It is widely agreed that the best way to lose weight is gradually, using techniques such as eating healthy, nutritious food and exercising regularly. Be wary of vitamin B injections, diets that promise fast and dramatic weight loss and "magic" herbal supplements, warned the doctors.

They called for the government to begin regulating weight-loss programs and clinics.

In Canada, 59 per cent of adults are overweight and 23 per cent are obese, according to a survey done in 2005 by Statistics Canada.

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Moroccan-inspired beauty

HAIR CARE Moroccanoil, a new line of lightweight hair care products specially formulated with Argan oil, is making a splash in Canadian salons.

Offering treatments for hydrating, styling and conditioning all hair types, the vitamin-rich products revive and strengthen weakened hair.

Just this past year the Moroccanoil Treatment was named Best New Breakthrough Product of 2008 by beauty professional online magazine, Salon52.ca.

In addition, the line offers an intense curl cream, hydrating style cream, gold glimmer shine spray, intense hydrating mask and restorative hair mask.

For more information, visit moroccanoil.com.

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Moore joins Special Relationship

Julianne Moore has been cast as Hillary Clinton in Special Relationship. She will star opposite Dennis Quaid — who will play ex-U.S. President Bill Clinton — in the movie which will show how his “relationship” with Monica Lewinsky nearly ended his time in power. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

New romance

Katy Perry and Josh Groban are dating. Perry has been on a series of intimate dates with the U.S. singer-songwriter, but the pair are keen to keep their fledgling romance out of the spotlight. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Perfect debut for Keri Hilson

IAN NATHANSON
for Metro Canada

STEVE HYMAN/FOR METRO CANADA

Keri Hilson

Her longtime love of singing helped Keri Hilson score backup vocal spots with the likes of Nas, Xzibit and Kardinal Offishall. Her model-perfect looks warranted her inclusion in Nelly Furtado’s Promiscuous Girl, Usher’s Love In This Club and Timbaland’s The Way I Are and Scream.

Now it appears that the Atlanta-born songstress is ready to step to the fore as a leading performer with her solo debut, In a Perfect World…, out today.

“Coming from the writing world, you want the fan to connect with the artists’ songs,” Hilson tells Metro of her pop-oriented R&B effort, with guest appearances from Timbaland, Kanye West, Ne-Yo and Lil Wayne. “So now I’m fulfilling my dreams as a singer of my own work.”

The 26-year-old cites such contemporaries as Ne-Yo and West who perform as well as write and produce for others. “Some writers get this mentality in their head that they don’t need to sing. I’d be worried about getting complacent.”

Long before she rubbed shoulders with some of R&B and hip hop’s elite, Hilson considered herself as an eager youngster who begged her mother to enter her in talent shows. She earned the nickname “Keri-oke” in elementary school, her teachers often remarking how she disrupted classes with her constant singing.

For a period between, her focal points were aimed squarely as a songwriter for hire, as part of a collective of writers and producers referred to as The Clutch. Among her clientele: Ciara, Ludacris, Usher, Nas and Mary J. Blige.

Oh, and the hook-laden chorus to Britney Spears’ 2007 comeback single, Gimme More? Yep, credit Hilson for that.“I was collaborating with Nate ‘Danja’ Hills, a protégé of Timbaland’s,” she says, “and remember us hearing the track and I started going off in this high-pitched voice, ‘Gimme-gimme. Gimme. Gimme-gimme. Gimme-gimme.’ … That was the hook.”

A new hero is born

Reese Witherspoon finds new voice in Monsters vs. Aliens

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Reese Witherspoon faced a new challenge in portraying Susan, her character in Monsters vs. Aliens who transforms from a regular-size bride-to-be into a five-story-tall superhero: Talking like a convincing action hero.

“That’s not a voice I have in my repertoire,” she admits. “So they kept trying to coach me to be more like Arnold Schwarzenegger or Sylvester Stallone. That took me a long time.”

After years of comedies and dramas, Monsters vs. Aliens — opening Friday — is Witherspoon’s first real action movie. Luckily, it’s animated, so the most physical exertion the Oscar-winning actress had to endure was recording “effort noises,” the grunting, wincing and panting that accompany the film’s dizzying action sequences, like when a massive alien robot chases Susan through a crumbling San Francisco.

Witherspoon was particularly drawn to this project because of its strong female lead. “I’ve been offered a lot of animated films before,” she explains. “Sometimes they were playing a girlfriend, and sometimes they were playing a girl who got rescued by a guy. This was the first opportunity where the woman was at the centre or the movie.”

And the journey Susan takes in the film — after being walloped by a radioactive meteor on her wedding day — spoke to Witherspoon on a deeper level. “It’s got an incredible message about finding yourself and your identity,” she says. “Are you a person who struggles in the shadow of another person just so you don’t have to be alone or afraid or find your own strengths? Or are you someone who’s willing to take a chance and accomplish great things?”

But beyond playing a strong female protagonist, Witherspoon loved creating a female superhero, something she feels are in short supply. She remembers asking her children, Ava, 9, and Deacon, 5, to name their favourite caped crusaders. While her son could rattle off a host of names including Batman, Spider-Man and Superman, her daughter was at a loss. “She was like, ‘I don’t know. The girl in the Justice League with wings? I can’t remember her name.’”

> **“It’s got an incredible message about finding yourself and your identity.”**
> Reese Witherspoon

As for Witherspoon, her favourite superhero was always Wonder Woman. “I watched Linda Carter over and over and over again,” she says. “I had my golden lasso and my whole costume that I wore for seven Halloweens in a row.”

But that doesn’t necessarily mean Witherspoon is up for portraying the famous character on the big screen. For now, she’s happy to keep her action movie roles in the animated realm. “If I never had to see the inside of a gym, I’d be a very happy person.”

Reese Witherspoon portrays a superhero in the animated action movie Monsters vs. Aliens.

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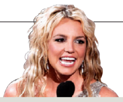

Spears makes People shortlist

Britney Spears has made Time magazine's shortlist of World's Most Influential People of 2009. People can visit the magazine website to cast their vote for the singer. **MSN.COM**

Female directors in the spotlight

Festival showcases films from around the world

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

The opening night gala selection for Toronto's Female Eye Film Festival raised the ire of critics at last year's Sundance Film Festival.

In fact the independent film, Hounddog, never even made it into mainstream theatres in the U.S. and has yet to grace any screens in Canada because of controversy surrounding a sexual assault scene in the production starring Dakota Fanning and Robin Wright Penn.

But perhaps it will finally get the play it deserves at the Female Eye festival, opening tomorrow, which celebrates women directors from Canada and around the world.

"I have no idea how it (Hounddog) escaped any kind of recognition by the academy," said Leslie-Ann Coles executive director of the festival.

The film fest has been running since 2001 and for the first time ever will screen selections during the day Friday, then continues all weekend long with a variety of shorts and features directed by women.

Deborah Kampmeier, the director of Hounddog, will take part in a Q and A session after the screening and the New York state native said she's proud to be part of the festival once again.

"I think our society has not been able to hear women's voices for a really long time and I think it's hard for women to even hear their own voices," she said.

In the U.S., she said, only six per cent of directors are women.

"That means that 94 per cent of our stories are being told by men and that's deeply disturbing to me," she said.

Coles founded the Female Eye festival after she realized, as an actor and director herself, there weren't enough platforms to showcase women's work.

She said she wondered if women weren't making films or if women-directed films just weren't being programmed and found the latter was true.

In addition, there's a lack of backing for female-directed films, she said.

"They're not green lit as easily and not funded as generously as their male counterparts," she said. "Why that is I'm not 100 per cent sure."

With the recession this year Coles said the festival's been built on a shoestring but she hopes the "astonishing" quality of the films, including Kampmeier's, will continue to pull in the crowds.

- The festival opens with Hounddog at Bloor Cinema tomorrow at 7 p.m. and closes Sunday.

More Details

- For more information on tickets, pricing and screening locations visit femaleeyefilmfestival.com.

Dakota Fanning holds a live snake on the set of Hounddog.

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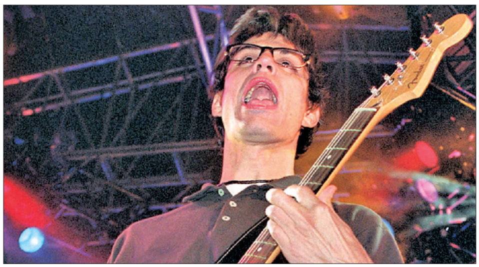
Japan dominates at Asian Film Awards
Kiyoshi Kurosawa's Tokyo Sonata was named best film at the third Asian Film Awards yesterday. Another Japanese, filmmaker Hirokazu Koreeda, was named best director for Still Walking. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Many artists love to hate Junos

As the Juno Awards roll through Vancouver, the show promises to showcase the best of the city's music scene — but there's one local musician who won't be stepping onto the GM Place stage.

Matthew Good, who's won three Junos, calls the show pointless and says he won't be attending.

"When it's actually a television broadcast that celebrates actual Canadian music, rather than who's doing well internationally and has been in car commercials and iPod commercials ... I'll go,'' he said in a telephone interview.


THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE PHOTO

Vancouver rocker Matthew Good thinks the Junos are pointless.

Good is hardly the only musician who's critical of the annual celebration of the Canadian music industry, which will be held Sunday (CTV, 9 p.m. ET).

Nickelback leads with five nominations going into the show, followed by Sam Roberts with four nods and Celine Dion and Hedley with three apiece.

For seven of the biggest Juno categories — including album of the year, artist of the year and group of the year — nominations are based at least partially on sales. And therein lies the problem, according to Good and others. In the major categories, the Junos take their cues from what sells, and, Good says, that usually means celebrating bands simply for making commercially viable music.

As a result, he's not interested in participating. "When it actually promotes Canadian music at root levels, and it isn't kind of this weekend when the Canadian music industry pretends that it's this independent industry and not just marketing warehouses for the United States, then sure, I'll be a part of it," Good said.

Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences President Melanie Berry said Monday that the awards are working hard to honour artists from all pockets of the Canadian music industry.

"The Juno Awards offers a whole weekend devoted to celebrating Canadian music in all its forms," said Berry, who pointed out that the weekend's JunoFest event would feature more than 100 different Canadian acts. "We have worked very hard over the last few years to ensure that Juno weekend is inclusive for all artists and all musical tastes."

Canada's Music Awards
JUNO
Awards

Good's distaste for the Junos is nothing new. He said he didn't like the show when he was winning awards, either. "It's pointless," said Good, who's working on a new album called Vancouver.

Toronto singer/songwriter Howie Beck, who just released his fourth album, How to Fall Down in Public, is similarly disillusioned by the show. "What's particularly lame is that the music industry here complains about the state of the industry and at the same time, they're still nominating the same (stuff) they've been nominating for 15 years," he said. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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Canadian musicians happy to help vinyl revival

MUSIC When assembling his new triple album, Joel Plaskett forced himself to show a bit of restraint.

He wanted to include 30 songs, but trimmed the release to 27 because of a seemingly strange concern: He was worried the sound quality would suffer on vinyl.

"Vinyl doesn't sound good over 40 minutes so you have to keep it brief,'' the Halifax rocker said during a recent visit to Toronto. "That's why I cut it to 27 songs, because I wanted the vinyl to sound good. If you go beyond that, the sound quality deteriorates."

Worrying about LPs might seem odd in 2009, but Plaskett is just one of many musicians happy to accommodate the recent vinyl revival.

According to U.S. numbers released by Neilsen SoundScan, 1.88 million LP albums were sold in 2008 — an 89 per cent increase over the 990,000 sold in '07.

An increase in sales on any format in today's anemic music industry is significant, and musicians — many of whom are keen on vinyl to begin with — are taking notice.

U2 released No Line on the Horizon earlier this month in a limited edition double-LP package, while many of last year's biggest hits — including Coldplay's Viva La Vida and Metallica's Death Magnetic — were also available on vinyl.

So, why the sudden resurgence?

"I feel like it's the one thing that survives," Plaskett said. "CDs, when they scuff up, they're garbage. And the plastic cases — they're like glorified cassettes, basically.

"Vinyl, you still find one that might skip, but you can find records from the '50s that still play just fine. They crackle and they have this character."

Plaskett's new album, Three, comes out today and is also available on three CDs. It's the third album he's released solely under his own name (he also puts out records with a band as the Joel Plaskett Emergency).

Plaskett talks about the social aspect of vinyl — of hanging out with his friends, pulling records off the shelf and listening to things together.

"In the world of MP3s, it's like: 'Oh yeah, I have a hard drive with 400,000 songs.' Hey, congratulations, that's awesome," he said. "But I still like the physical world that a record inhabits."

Halifax-based singer Joel Plaskett made adjustments to his new album Three to make it fit the vinyl format.

Yet the amount of space a record takes up can also cause problems for retailers.

"There's really no shelf space for it," said Terry McBride, CEO of Vancouver-based label Nettwerk Records. "You don't see vinyl at a Wal-Mart or a Target. So, basically it's a mail-order consumption and independent record stores, and there's not many of those left."

McBride is also skeptical about the commercial viability of the format. "If you don't have access to it you have to be a real fan to go get it. Who still buys vinyl? Who really consumes vinyl?"

Metric singer Emily Haines, for one.

The Toronto indie rock band is releasing its fourth album, Fantasies, on April 14. It will be available in a vinyl edition that will include extra tracks and the rights to a digital download of the album.

"The thing that I'm most excited about from a technological standpoint is that vinyl is by far the most interesting medium as a musician to have your music on," she said. "It is, I do believe, how God intended it to be."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Duff to appear in Law & Order: SVU episode
Hilary Duff is guest-starring in a dramatic role on Law & Order: SVU next month. The episode, titled Selfish, is set to air April 28. **PEOPLE.COM**

DVD picks

Quantum of Solace

Director: Marc Forster

AS THE FIRST acknowledged sequel in the 007 series, Quantum picks up where Casino Royale left off, with James Bond (Daniel Craig) seeking payback for the demise of his lover Vesper Lynd. Several secondary characters from the last film also return, and prior knowledge of their modus operandi is a definite plus.

But even fans with photographic recall may have trouble with this new mission, because Quantum offers little solace for anyone seeking Bond pleasures of old.

Gone are the trademark jests, the clever gadgets and the outsized plots to blow up the world. The girls are harder to bed and the locales are less exciting.

Director Marc Forster (Monster's Ball) has taken independence and innovation a bit too far, but news is not all bad. In the case of Craig's sophomore outing as Bond, it's entirely good. He adds layers of emotional and physical substance to a character that had nearly become a cartoon.

The disappointing extras in the double-disc and Blu-ray sets include several making-of featurettes (ho-hum) plus the Crew Files blogs that have already been posted online.

Watchmen: Tales of the Black Freighter

Director: Zack Snyder

ANYONE WHO complained about the nearly three-hour running time of Zack Snyder's Watchmen obviously didn't appreciate the expert trimming that kept it from clocking over four hours.

The original graphic novel by writer Alan Moore and artist Dave Gibbons included two grand digressions: Tales of the Black Freighter, a concurrent comic strip that tangents off Watchmen with an allegorical pirate theme; and Under the Hood, the tell-all tome about the Minutemen, who proceeded the Watchmen as masked vigilantes.

Rather than try and jam them into the film, Snyder has spun them as a separate DVD, with plans to integrate them into a director's cut version of Watchmen later this year.

It's essential viewing, and in some ways even more faithful to the source material than Snyder's film triumph. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Warner turning old to gold

MADE-TO-ORDER DVDS Warner Bros. is reaching into its film vaults so it can sell old movies on made-to-order DVDs, in a move it hopes will goose sales of a vital product in a downturn.

The studio will sell copies of 150 films from the silent era to the 1980s Brat Pack that have never been released on DVD.

Internet downloads of the movies will cost $14.95 US, while DVDs sent in the mail are $19.95.

The initiative, which Warner claims is the first of its kind for a major studio, is an effort by the Time Warner Inc. subsidiary to combat what could be a fundamental decline in demand for DVD purchases — a falloff that can be blamed on market saturation as much as the recession.

Warner's decision to open up its vault "sounds like it's a risk-free way for them to generate a little money on some very old content," Adams said.

By making the DVDs only when the movies are ordered by a customer, Warner doesn't have to worry about filling up a warehouse with inventory that struggles to sell.

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Titles

- Titles include The Mating Game (1959), starring Debbie Reynolds, and a string of Cary Grant flicks from Mr. Lucky (1943) to Once Upon a Honeymoon (1942).

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McKellar marries

The Wonder Years' Winnie Cooper is all grown up. Danica McKellar, a mathematician and actress who played the beloved character on the hit TV show, tied the knot on Sunday with composer Mike Verta. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

60 Minutes shines

60 Minutes has thrown a few haymakers in recent weeks: The first interview with hero pilot Chesley Sullenberger; a long-sought talk with Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke; and a sit-down with President Barack Obama.

It's paying off where it really counts in the world of television. The CBS newsmagazine has emphatically reversed a long, nearly unbroken decline in viewership this season, with a sharper focus on the news stories that define the day.

"We stand on the shoulders of giants," correspondent Scott Pelley said, "but I dare say this program has never been better than it is right now."

In an office where the sense of history and pride is palpable — executive producer Jeff Fager has Emmy Awards on the floor because he's run out of shelf space — some of his colleagues weren't ready to go as far as Pelley. But they do think 60 Minutes was wise in how it has dived into stories about the economy and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This season, the program is averaging 15 million viewers an episode on Sunday nights, according to Nielsen Media Research. If it holds up, it will be the largest average audience for the show since the 2000-01 season. Since the 1997-98 season when nearly 20 million people watched the show each week, the viewership has declined each year, except for a brief blip in 2003.

"It's a reflection of Americans' appetite for important stories and understanding of them, and I also think that's what we do well," Fager said. "We're good at it and we're doing more of them."

The show has done many step-back stories on the economy. Pelley pursued the Bernanke interview for a year, trying to work the financial chief past his reluctance.

"I come from the hard news side of CBS News and I miss the days of crashing stories for the broadcast," said Pelley, using industry slang for fighting a deadline. "Now we're doing that pretty regularly."

Pelley's interview with Bernanke drew nearly 13 million viewers earlier this month while Dateline NBC at the same time had 4.3 million people watching Olympian Michael Phelps tell Matt Lauer about being photographed smoking marijuana. In a less serious time, those numbers might have flipped.

Fewer television news outlets are doing the type of stories that 60 Minutes is, and the lack of competition has worked in the show's favour. "There are fewer newsmagazines and more news," he said. "That's been kind of a lucky convergence."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obamania

- Much of the ratings success can actually be attributed to Obama, as a post-election interview with his kitchen Cabinet and one with the president-elect did extremely well. Obama appears to have a solid relationship with Steve Kroft, who has interviewed him three times at length this TV season.

Williams OK after heart surgery

HEALTH Robin Williams was recovering at the Cleveland Clinic after heart surgery that his doctors deemed successful, his publicists said Monday. The 57-year-old actor had an operation to replace an aortic valve on March 13, publicists said. He was expected to make a complete recovery in the next eight weeks.

"A couple of hours after surgery, he was entertaining the medical team and making us all laugh,'' said Dr. A. Marc Gillinov, a cardiothoracic surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic.

Court may step in for Falk case

LEGAL A judge has refused to establish a conservatorship for actor Peter Falk, but has scheduled testimony to decide whether court intervention may be necessary. Catherine Falk petitioned for a conservatorship over her father last year, stating stated that the actor suffers from Alzheimer's disease and advanced dementia. The move is opposed by Falk's wife of 32 years.

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TO	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
3/24/09 primetime	265	353	2	TVO	Undersea Exp.	Parks	The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Marking Time (N)		*Linda & Ali: Two Worlds Within Four Walls*		
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	NCIS		90210 (HDTV)		Project Runway Canada		News
	215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere II	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	22 Minutes	Wild Roses (N) (DVS)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		According-Jim	According-Jim	Scrubs	Friends	Primetime: What Would		News (N)
	212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Hollywood	American Idol				Law & Order: SVU		News (N)
	218	345	11	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	The Biggest Loser (N)				Dr. 90210 New arrivals.		News (N)
	137	763	13	TFO	Panorama		La Forêt enchantée		*Regarde les hommes tomber* (1994, Drame policier)				Côa
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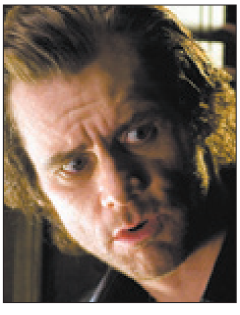
	213	326	15	SUN	Scrubs	George Lopez	*My Silent Partner* (2006, Suspense) Joanna Going.				To Serve and Protect		Becker
	-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Presidential Address		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		(10:01) Without a Trace (N)		News (N)
	-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Presidential Address		The Biggest Loser (N)				News (N)
	-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Presidential Address		Dancing With the Stars		Primetime: What Would		News
	219	346	20	ACH-B	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Reaper "The Favorite"		Dancing With the Stars		(10:02) Without a Trace (N)		News (N)
	-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	Presidential Address		House "The Itch" (HDTV)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61	PBS	News-Lehrer	Keeping Up	Nova (HDTV) (N) (DVS)		Frontline (N) (DVS)		American Future: A History		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Reaper "The Favorite"		90210 (HDTV)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331	SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		WBZ News (N)	'70s Show	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
	298	653	332	TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Friends	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Reaper
news	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Playing the Machines (N)		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report		CNBC Reports (HDTV)		Cruise Inc: Big Money		Cruise Inc: Big Money		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22	net	MLB Preseason Baseball Boston Red Sox at New York Yankees. (Live)						Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30	TSN	NHL Hockey Washington Capitals at Toronto Maple Leafs. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey Detroit Red Wings at Edmonton Oilers.			
	411	457	58	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman
	417	406	81	SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	Low Life	Low Life	Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Hot Import	Hot Import	Pimp My Ride
family	551	542	25	YTV	Adrenaline Proj	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach "Lost"		Mystery Hnt.
	554	544	45	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN "2-4-1"	Futurama	American Dad	Robot Chicken	American Dad	Moral Orel
	556	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
cable variety	602	567	27	W	Will & Grace	Friends	How to Look Good Naked		Style by Jury	Style by Jury	How to Look Good Naked		Maxed Out
	570	580	29	MM	Degrassi: TNG	Instant Star	Paris Hilton's British Friend		Paris Hilton's British Friend		Degrassi: TNG	Instant Star	The Shift
	615	520	31	A&E	CSI: Miami (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		Manhunters
	700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Serie A	Magnifica Italia	Nati Ieri		Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
	571	581	36	MMM	mmmtop	Where You At	Popaganda "Skinny 911"		Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Listed
	575	583	38	CMT	Cross Canada Countdown		Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	CMT Star
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		Mutant X		Testees	Trailer Park	Saving Grace (N)		House
	620	523	40	BVO	Buffy St. Marie		Live at the Rehearsal Hall		Freddie Mercury		Bravo! Salutes the Junos		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Rich Poor	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Rich Bride, Poor Bride		ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	NCIS "Terminal Leave"		Sandhogs		Crime Stories		NCIS "Terminal Leave"		Sea Hunters
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Lewis Black	Flt.-Conchords	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Pure Design	Style	Sarah's House	Design Inc.	Colin & Justin's Home Heist		Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	*Underworld* ★★ (2003, Horror) Kate Beckinsale, Scott Speedman.					Seinfeld	Family Guy
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park	*Roll Bounce* ★★ (2005, Comedy-Drama) Bow Wow, Mike Epps.					College Hill	College Hill	*Roll Bounce*
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Torchwood		(10:05) Destination Truth (N)		Stargate SG-1
	581	566	52	MTV	Room Raiders	After	MTV News	Cribs	From G's to Gents		From G's to Gents		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Vanity Insanity	Tube Tales	Tube Tales	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	56	FOOD	Chef at Home	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover		The F Word (N)		Good Eats	Good Eats	Iron Chef Am.
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Chambers	On the Buses	Quantum Leap		I Prophesy	Supernatural	Poltergeist
	621	527	63	STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	Living the Life	Look-A-Like	The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Backyardigans	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Big Comfy	Zigby	Max & Ruby
	115	711	101	TVA	Les Gags (SC)	Star Académie:	La Fièvre de la danse (SC)		La Promesse (HDTV) (N) (SC)		TVA 22 heures	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
	126	730	102	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	526	507	249	VIVA	Judging Amy		Missing "Sea of Love"		Missing "One Night Stand"		Encounters	In Dreams	Psychic Inv.
	300	601	301	M1	*Urban Justice*	*The Point* (2006, Drama) Jonny Wagge.			*The Number 23* ★ (2007, Mystery)			(10:45) *Chapter 27*	
	305	612	306	PIX	(7:15) *Danger Zone* ★★ (1996, Suspense) Billy Zane.				*Canadian Bacon* ★★ (1995, Comedy)			(10:40) *Scream* (1996)	

critics'corner

The Number 23

Comedic actors who want to do drama need to choose their roles very, very carefully. Jim Carrey got it right with "The Truman Show," a media-age morality play with a pleasantly light touch. He missed the mark in this 2007 mystery as a man obsessed with a book he receives as a present. He finds its main character, a detective, stunningly similar to himself. He also notices how much a certain numeral plays a role in the sleuth's life. Somewhere in this mediocre movie is a good one screaming to get out; don't hold your breath. 9 PM on M1



Wild Roses

From black gold to blackballing — such is the oil business. In this new episode, David (Gary Hudson) gets all the oil companies in Alberta to shun the Henrys. Lucy (Sarah Power) responds by proposing a partnership with the one oilman she trusts. Rebecca (Amy Lalonde) hires a private investigator. Steve Byers and Kim Huffman also star in "Time and Chance." 9 PM on CBC

Missing Matt

Where in the world was Matt Lauer yesterday? Not on the Today show, due to a weekend incident as he was riding his bicycle and encountered a deer, according to his NBC cohort Meredith Vieira. **PEOPLE.COM**

Celebrity Buzz

Zac ditches his dancing shoes

CAREER Apparently afraid of being typecast as a song-and-dance man, Zac Efron has pulled out of a planned remake of the film Footloose, which was set to start shooting this spring and be released next year.

Efron reportedly told Paramount Pictures that he did not want to do another musical at this point in his career, according to the Wrap.

"People had been working on this project since last July," a source close to the production says. "We were all shocked."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Jackson No. 4 on the way?

KIDS When Michael Jackson isn't planning his latest money-making scheme in the U.K., it seems that the star is window shopping for babies, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The controversial King Of Pop has admitted to wanting to expand his family when he's over in the U.K. and reportedly wants to find a new child when he stays in the U.K. for his comeback concerts this year.

The Thriller hitmaker already has three children — Prince, 11, Paris Katherine, 10, and Prince Michael II, five. The eldest two are from a brief marriage to his former dermatology nurse Deborah Rowe and it is not known who gave birth to Prince Michael II.

A source tells British newspaper the Sunday Express that Jackson hopes to adopt a child while staying in Britain for his 50-date residency at London O2 Arena later this year.

The source says, "Before his concerts he has said he wants to spend at least three weeks in Britain, getting used to the time zone and exploring the country. It is during this period that he wants to have meetings about adoption. He has not said if he wants a boy or girl, just that it would be good for the family to have another brother or sister."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES

L.A. is 'vacuous': Rose

PEOPLE Rose Byrne hated living in "vacuous" Los Angeles, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Australian-born actress moved to the U.S. city while she was promoting her movies Troy and Wicker Park in 2004, but struggled to adjust because she couldn't separate herself from her work.

She said: "It is pretty vacuous a lot of the time. It is just that thing of when you go out, you feel like you are always networking. It is sometimes hard to have a conversation about something else.

"I don't know how you can be an artist trying to represent someone's life, if all you're doing is being involved in the film industry."

METRO NEW SERVICES

LeAnn's husband gay?

RUMOUR First came last week's reports that LeAnn Rimes has been having an affair with her married co-star, Eddie Cibrian. Now, speculation is rising once again about the sexuality of Rimes' husband of seven years, Dean Sheremet.

A woman who claimed to be Sheremet's cousin and identified herself as "Pebbles" called in to Michigan's Mojo In The Morning radio show to claim that Sheremet is gay, popcrunch.com reports.

"The family literally used to take bets on what age he would come out, and then all of the sudden he got married," Pebbles said.

Rimes' publicist laughed off the allegations.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Warren Beatty at war over Dick Tracy rights

CAREER Warren Beatty is facing a lawsuit over legal rights to the brand Dick Tracy, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

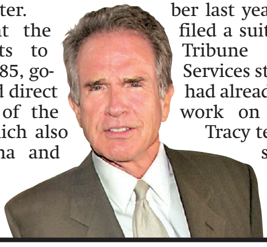
In a Delaware court filing, Tribune Media Services alleged Beatty "wrongly claims" to have exclusive motion picture and television rights to the police detective character.

Beatty bought the broadcast rights to Dick Tracy in 1985, going on to act and direct the 1990 film of the same name, which also starred Madonna and Al Pacino.

According to court papers, Tribune Co. claims Beatty "made no productive use" of the rights for more than a decade and therefore they should revert back to Tribune as the franchise is potentially worth millions.

Court papers reveal that the battle for Dick Tracy has been going on since 2006, and in November last year Beatty filed a suit against Tribune Media Services stating he had already begun work on a Dick Tracy television special.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Roseanne's comeback

CAREER Television may be getting another dose of Roseanne Barr in the near future, msn.com reports.

Barr, whose last TV effort was an HBO stand-up special in 2006, is working to develop a new sitcom with Caryn Mandabach, one of the executive producers of Roseanne. The two have already pitched the idea to FOX, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Few details about the project are known at this point. The HR says only that the show would be a family comedy and would star Barr as the matriarch. Arrested Development veteran Jim Vallely is attached to write the script.

After Roseanne left ABC in 1997, Barr hosted a daytime talk show and also did an unscripted show, The Real Roseanne, in 2003 that never got off the ground, as Barr had an emergency hysterectomy just as production was set to start.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tori throws party encore

PEOPLE After missing his birthday party the previous weekend due to a high fever, Tori Spelling and Dean McDermott's son Liam was treated to a car-themed encore on Sunday, people.com reports.

"Liam is obsessed with the animated movie Cars," says his mom, "and I made him a little red car racing jumpsuit with a Liam name patch on it."

Together with his mom, dad, nine-month-old sister Stella and 16 party guests, Liam enjoyed a blow-up ball pit and a small petting zoo. The Jumpitz, a children's performance group, helped the intimate group sing Happy Birthday to Liam before the cake cutting.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Recession's latest victim: Lauren Conrad

Lauren Conrad has opted to take her clothing line off the racks. Her rep says the Hills star is cancelling her spring/summer 2009 line and halting production because of the current economic crisis. **METRO WORLD NEWS**

Celebrity Buzz

Reese's 33rd bash

PEOPLE Jake Gyllenhaal threw Reese Witherspoon a 33rd birthday bash at his Los Angeles home on Saturday, usmagazine.com reports.

Maggie Gyllenhaal and Peter Sarsgaard (and their daughter, Ramona), and Robert Downey Jr. and his wife Susan were among the guests, who enjoyed a DJ set that included Lady Gaga's Just Dance and Al Green's Let's Stay Together.

Witherspoon spent her actual birthday, Sunday, at the Los Angeles premiere of her new animated flick, Monsters vs. Aliens.

"I'm looking forward to my birthday," she recently told reporters at a press conference for the film. "I think it is a great thing, to be able to be doing things with my kids and having them be proud of me. It's like, what's better than feeling you've accomplished things in life?"

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jessica's dad turns on Tony

PEOPLE Jessica Simpson's father is jealous of her boyfriend Tony Romo, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer-and-actress — who has been dating the American football quarterback since early last year — is reportedly being encouraged to separate from her boyfriend by her dad-and-manager Joe Simpson, because he believes she is losing focus on her career.

A source said: "Joe now feels that Tony has become too much of a distraction for Jessica. Any free time she has, Jess wants to spend with Tony. But rather than blaming his daughter's work ethic, Joe points the finger at Tony."

But Simpson is still very much in love with the sports star and is desperate to take their relationship to the next level. The source revealed: "If she had her wish, she'd be married and pregnant."

The 28-year-old beauty recently admitted to friends she is concerned Romo will never pop the question.

A source said: "Jessica was really hoping she was going to get an engagement ring. She wanted one for Christmas, then she thought maybe New Year's Eve. Her last hope was that Tony would propose on Valentine's Day — but he didn't."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity child power play date

PEOPLE Usmagazine.com is calling it a power play date. Katie Holmes took daughter Suri, 2, to The Children's Arts Studio in Santa Monica, Calif., on Sunday. Joining them: Victoria and David Beckham's youngest two boys, Cruz, 4, and Romeo, 6.

Clutching a stuffed animal, Suri wore a blue-spotted dress, red-striped cardigan and red ruby shoes. Later in the day, mom and daughter popped by Crumbs Bakery in Beverly Hills for some goodies.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mariska back to Law and Order

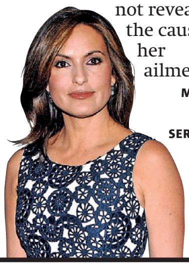
HEALTH After a nearly three-week absence, Mariska Hargitay was scheduled to return to the set of Law & Order: SVU on Monday, people.com reports.

Hargitay, 44, underwent surgery for a partially collapsed lung in early January, but returned to work later that month.

She went back into the hospital again on March 3 and has been sidelined ever since.

The Emmy winner has not revealed the cause of her ailment.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Don't undergo look-alike surgery, Demi urges fan

PEOPLE Demi Moore has urged a terminally ill fan not to have plastic surgery to look like her, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Ghost actress doesn't want 29-year-old Lisa Connell to go under the knife before she dies, insisting she is already beautiful.

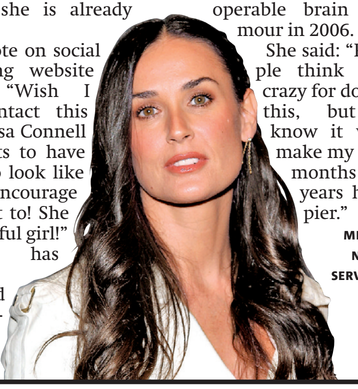
She wrote on social networking website Twitter: "Wish I could contact this woman Lisa Connell who wants to have surgery to look like me and encourage her to not to! She is a beautiful girl!"

Connell has terminal cancer and had announced plans she was going to spend $60,000 US on surgery in a bid to resemble her idol.

Connell decided to have liposuction, a breast enhancement, an eyebrow lift and work on her skin and teeth shortly after she was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour in 2006.

She said: "People think I'm crazy for doing this, but I know it will make my last months or years happier."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Agency has eye on Lindsay

CAREER Lindsay Lohan is to be offered a modelling contract, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Mean Girls star — whose film career has stalled in recent years — has caught the eye of Ivan Bart of IMG Models.

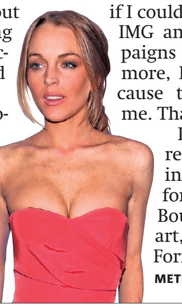
Upon hearing the 22-year-old actress could be considering a career change, Bart said: "She's a beautiful girl and obviously knows a lot about fashion. Providing that she was contractually free, we would take a meeting."

Just last week, Lohan revealed she is thinking about quitting acting to become a model.

She said: "I love doing photo shoots. I mean, if I could just sign with IMG and do ad campaigns and model more, I'd do that because that's fun for me. That's not work."

Lohan has already appeared in campaigns for Dooney and Bourke, Jill Stuart, Miu Miu and Fornarina.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Madonna and Jesus adopting?

KIDS Madonna's relationship with Jesus Luz seems to be moving fast. After just three months together, the Brazilian model is ready to adopt a child with the singer, his ex-girlfriend, Catharina Franca, tells Britain's the Mirror.

"He adores kids but he accepts they could not have children of their own, and is talking about the possibility of adopting with Madonna," Franca tells the newspaper. "He's not with Madonna for her money or fame. He's with her because he loves her."

METRO WORLD NEWS

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90%
8° / 0°

Thursday
Showers
40%
10° / 0°

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1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				16				■	17			
■	■	■	18			■	19	20				
21	22	23			■	24				■	■	■
25				■	26					27	28	29
30			■	31					■	32		
33			34					■	35			
■	■	■	36				■	37				
38	39	40				■	41			■	■	■
42				■	43	44				45	46	47
48				■	49			■	50			
51				■	52			■	53			

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		6				7	1	
2	5						8	
			8		6	4		
		1			9	8		2
			3		4			
3		2	1			5		
		9	7		5			
	7						9	6
	8	3				2		

Crossword across

1 VHS contemporary
5 "El —"
8 TV's Dr. McGraw
12 Mosque VIP
13 Privy
14 Carnival attraction
15 Effervescent
17 Lecherous look
18 Pitcher part
19 "Caddyshack" critter
21 Passé
24 Harp's ancestor
25 Cupid's alias
26 Unsteady
30 Intention
31 Actor LaBeouf et al
32 Fish eggs
33 Dilettante's interest
35 Ready for anything
36 Trenches
37 Walking sticks
38 Senescence
41 "— Town"
42 Rowboat needs
43 Chewing in small bits
48 Menageries
49 Prior to
50 Concept
51 Catch sight of
52 Shaft of light
53 Hen pen

Crossword down

1 Clothing protector
2 Ostrich's cousin
3 Bill
4 Strolls
5 Paper holder
6 Charged bit
7 Leftovers carrier
8 Drive on
9 Lofty
10 Not working
11 See 17-Across
16 Cover
20 Spheres
21 Conked out
22 Met melody
23 Grant's is famous
24 Body parts often "girded"
26 Bleach
27 Persia, now
28 Iditarod terminus
29 The Bee —
31 Punch hard
34 Obstreperous
35 Vampire repellent
37 Newsroom newbie
38 Leak slowly
39 Vientiane's land
40 Let fall
41 Do what I say
44 Savings plan acronym
45 "— not choose to run"
46 Ultramodernist
47 Space

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

A	G	O	■	F	A	B	L	E	■	S	O	P
B	O	W	■	A	M	A	I	N	■	O	R	E
S	O	L	I	C	I	T	O	R	■	L	E	E
■	■	■	C	I	S	■	N	O	T	I	O	N
A	B	S	E	N	T	■	S	L	A	P	■	■
R	I	O	■	G	A	G	■	L	U	S	T	Y
E	L	L	S	■	D	I	M	■	T	I	R	E
S	K	I	M	P	■	G	A	B	■	S	E	A
■	■	D	O	R	K	■	R	O	O	M	E	R
B	A	N	G	O	R	■	T	O	N	■	■	■
E	V	E	■	S	O	L	I	T	A	I	R	E
R	E	S	■	I	N	A	N	E	■	N	U	N
M	R	S	■	T	E	P	I	D	■	N	E	D

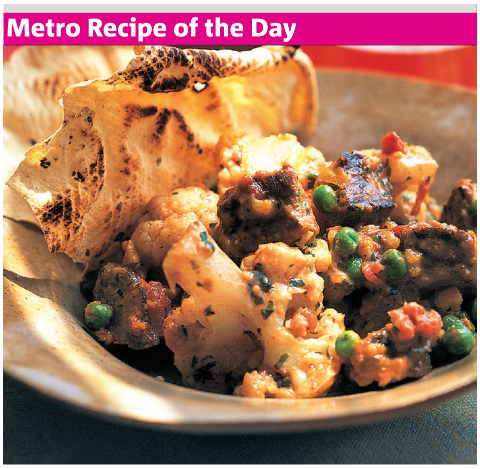
2	6	8	4	7	3	5	9	1
3	7	5	1	2	9	6	8	4
9	1	4	6	8	5	2	3	7
6	4	9	7	5	1	8	2	3
7	8	2	3	9	6	1	4	5
5	3	1	8	4	2	7	6	9
1	9	3	2	6	7	4	5	8
4	2	7	5	3	8	9	1	6
8	5	6	9	1	4	3	7	2

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min	Genius
13-17 min	Scholar
17-21 min	Smart
21-25 min	Not bad
25+ min	Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Lamb Curry

INGREDIENTS:

1 tsp (5 ml) olive oil
12 oz (375 g) well-trimmed boneless lamb loin, cut into 3/4-in. (2-cm) chunks
1 medium onion, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp (15 ml) grated fresh ginger
1 tbsp (15 ml) curry powder
4 cups (1 l) cauliflower florets
1 cup (250 ml) canned crushed tomatoes
salt to taste
1/2 cup (125 ml) water
1 1/2 cups (375 ml) frozen peas
1/3 cup (75 ml) chopped cilantro
1/2 cup (125 ml) plain yogourt
2 tbsp (25 ml) flour

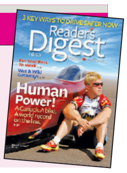
METHOD:

1. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium heat. Add lamb and cook until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer lamb to plate with slotted spoon.
2. Add onion, garlic and ginger to pot and cook, stirring frequently, until onion is tender, about 5 minutes. Add curry powder and cauliflower and stir.
3. Add tomatoes, salt and water to pot and boil. Return lamb to pot and reduce to simmer. Cover and cook until lamb and cauliflower are tender, about 40 minutes.
4. Add peas and cilantro. Cook until peas are heated through, about 3 minutes. In small bowl, mix yogourt and flour, then stir into pot and cook over low heat, stirring, until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**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Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A mild flirtation will amuse you. Somebody's profound thoughts will disturb you. No problem is too difficult to be forgotten.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
An unnecessary agreement comes to an end. Someone's bad temper can be tamed. Rise above pettiness about mysteries and secrets.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A long-standing burden is lifted. An opinionated reply leads to an unfortunate situation. You must make a huge leap of faith.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Stop pushing too hard and take a break. A troublesome buddy's support is appreciated. A situation is better than it looks at first.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Don't take anyone's promises too lightly. Don't gamble with a friend who enjoys flippancy. A wacky encounter affects those who wait.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
An awkward enemy makes slow progress. Persevere and succeed by trial and error. A cynical guy comes out of his shell.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A confidential meeting with a bureaucrat is concealed. Face the music when someone is accosted. Benefits come through rational discussions.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
Be careful around electrical objects. A perilous situation will develop when you speak your mind. Arrogance retards progress.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
A phone call lightens your mood. Confusion begins to dissipate. A controversy will develop if you're full of mischief.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Your job prospects improve when friends get involved. Remain hopeful about your future. Your forcefulness will shock people.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Don't be a noisy neighbour. Someone is caught in a naughty act. Eliminate stuff that is no longer useful.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Don't wait for anyone to ease your burdens. Disgraceful things are fun tonight. It's not compulsory to repeat any mistakes.

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- Interior Decorating
- Interior Decorating General Interest

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